For Reference

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM

Ex Libris
Universitatis
Albertaensis



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
University of Alberta Library

https://archive.org/details/Szkambara1971

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

M. SHOLOKHOV'S EARLY SHORT STORIES

by

© ALEXANDRA SZKAMBARA

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC LANGUAGES

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1971

AN ABSTRACT OF M. SHOLOKHOV'S EARLY SHORT STORIES

Mikhail Aleksandrovich Sholokhov (1905-) wrote his early short stories between 1923 and 1926 at the very beginning of his literary activity. In 1926 they were published in the collection Donskie rasskazy.

The aim of this thesis is to present a fundamental and systematic interpretation of M.A. Sholokhov's early short stories Donskie rasskazy which have been underestimated in favor of his greater works. Although there is available limited criticism of these stories by the Soviet and Western critics, the criticism of the latter has been generally reduced to re-telling the contents of the stories and to providing their general descriptions. The analyses of the Soviet literary critics, since they have to succumb to the official cannons of criticism, tend to be repetitive and monolithic. We approached the subject from the point of view of the history of the literary organizations in Russia and suggested the extent to which their values may be interwoven with those of M.A. Sholokhov.

Sholokhov employed artistic means to duplicate and transmit the knowledge that he had acquired regarding life and the emerging ideology of the Party. He portrayed the life of the people he knew best with vitality and used his reaction as fully and vividly as possible. Throughout most of his early short stories Sholokhov remained an idealistic and prophetic writer. He is an idealist because of his deep conviction in a better life that would come in the not-so-distant future. Although this optimistic attitude prevails throughout Sholokhov's short stories, he also asserts in them to a certain degree unvarying universal principles; he makes an attempt to discern the truth about basic human values and to

prize them as something more than simply an abstraction of the ruling ideology.

Sholokhov's early short stories are an extended awareness of the emotional and overt responses to a specific historical occurrence, but not necessarily with the aim to mold and shape the behaviour of the reader. However, the reader may react sympathetically to the "truth" and, consequently, the stories may tend to stimulate and arouse a dynamic response within him.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express her sincerest appreciation to the following persons for their assistance during the preparation of this thesis:

Dr. E. Mozejko for his dedicated guidance and assistance; Dr. O. Zujewskyj for his many valuable comments and suggestions; Dr. G. Schaarschmidt for his constructive criticism and patience; Dr. T. Yedlin for her co-operation; Mrs. L. Taschuk and D. Hawryshko for performing clerical duties; Miss P. Lynkowsky and Miss C. Prynada for stylistic improvements, moral support and encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	INTRODUCTION: SHOLOKHOV AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF RUSSIAN LITERARY ORGANIZATIONS FROM 1917 TO 1932	1
II.	GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ASPECTS OF LITERARY STYLISTICS OF *DONSKIE RASSKAZY*.	21
	Classification of the Hero: Types and Variations Methods of Characterization Notes on the Composition	
III.	UNIVERSALITY AND OBJECTIVITY AS REFLECTED IN *DONSKIE RASSKAZY*.	51
IV.	THE ROLE OF NATURE IN DONSKIE RASSKAZY	64
V.	CONCLUSION: EVOLUTION OF SHOLOKHOV AS A WRITER AND A CRITIC.	79
	Sholokhov's Early Stories Versus His Statements Regarding Soviet Literature *Sud'ba cheloveka* -- A Logical Conclusion to "Put-dorozhen'ka"	
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.	91

A LIST OF THE ORIGINAL RUSSIAN TITLES OF SHOLOKHOV'S DONSKIE RASSKAZY (TALES OF THE DON) GIVEN IN RUSSIAN IN THIS THESIS

Russian	English
Rodinka	The Birthmark
Pastukh	The Herdsman
Prodkomissar	The Food Commissar
Aleshkino serdtse	Aleshka's Heart*
Bakhchevnik	The Watchman in the Vegetable Plots
Put'-dorozhen'ka	The Way and the Road
Nakhalenok	The Shame - Child
Predsedatel' revvoensoveta respubliki	The Chairman of the Republic Revolutionary Military Soviet
Smertnyi vrag	A Mortal Enemy
Zherebenok	The Foal
Chuzhaia krov'	Alien Blood
O Kolchake, krapive i prochem	About Kolchak, Stinging-nettle, etc.*
Krivaia stezhka	A Crooked Path*
Lazorevaia step	The Azure Steppe
Kolovert	The Diehard
Chervotochina	Dry Rot
Dvukhmuzhniaia	Bigamist*
Shibalkovo semia	Shibalok's Family
O Donprodkome i zlokliucheniakh zamestitelia Donprodkomissara tovarishcha Ptitsyna	About the Don Food Commissar and the Mishaps of comrade Ptitsyn, the Deputy of the Don Food Commissar*
Batraki	The Farm Labourers
Semeinyi chelovek	The Family Man

*These particular titles have no standardized translation; therefore, I have rendered my own.

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The Russian names, titles of stories and names of literary organizations in this thesis are transliterated in accordance with the system outlined in A Guide for the Writing of the M.A. Thesis published by the Department of Slavic Languages, University of Alberta.

CHAPTER I

SHOLOKHOV AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF RUSSIAN LITERARY ORGANIZATIONS FROM 1917 TO 1932

The October Revolution in Russia marked the birth of a new literature in that country. For the first time in her history literature was utilized for strengthening and developing the newly created Soviet state. The social and moral message became more important than aesthetic values. The role of the writer in any given work acquired paramount importance, for he was now expected to be a teacher, a propagandist for the new regime, and an "engineer of human minds". Many of the writers were strongly encouraged to write literary works according to the Communist Party precepts, while others did so because their own convictions regarding the role of literature coincided with those of the Party. Such demands upon writers led to the popularization of the short story, which enabled the writer to reach the masses in a relatively short span of time and convince them that their welfare and happiness lay in their aspiration for the goals set down by the Party. This, in essence, can be seen clearly in most of the early short stories of M.A. Sholokhov.

The new role of literature, however, did not develop immediately after the Revolution. In fact, the Revolution brought a sense of immediate relief to the Russian intelligentsia, even a sense of liberation unprecedented in the history of the Russian Empire. The absolute nature of the Empire prevented those members of the intelligentsia who were interested in the social and political life from openly voicing their views concerning social problems and from direct participation in

political life. The new regime that replaced it in the meantime was too busy consolidating its own power to devote due attention to literature. As a result of this freedom in the field of artistic endeavour, many literary organizations emerged in Russia between 1917 and 1932, which were responsible, to an extent, for the character of the new literature. In this chapter, we propose to describe these organizations and determine the degree of influence, if any, that these organizations exerted on the young short story writer, M.A. Sholokhov.

According to Harriet Borland, the history of the first fifteen years of Soviet literature is largely that of the ideological struggle for a proletarian socialist literature.[1] Thus, the literary revolution[2] lasted much longer than the political one. The reasons for this are many and varied. First of all, the term proletarian socialist literature was a very ambivalent one. Neither the Party nor the writers, observes E. Simmons, quite knew the purposes they were to realize, apart from the fact that they were to serve the broad masses.

> Even the leaders of the Party at that time, largely conservative in literature and still filled with nineteenth-century revolutionary enthusiasm for the author's right to express himself freely, hoped that writers would treat the new life in old forms, but in a context of value inspired by devotion to Marxian socialism.[3]

[1]Harriet Borland, Soviet Literary Theory and Practice During the First Five-Year Plan 1928-32 (New York: Columbia University King's Crown Press, 1950), p. 3.

[2]Because of the many profound and sudden differences between the pre-revolutionary period of the concerned literature and that of the post-revolutionary, many critics call that period of transition in belles-letters a literary revolution which culminated in August 1934 when the Union of Soviet Writers was formed.

[3]Ernest J. Simmons, Russian Fiction and Soviet Ideology (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), pp. 1-2.

As the cultural revolution was developing, the Communist Party adopted a very cautious policy towards many established writers and members of the older intelligentsia who might have rejected the idea of using their talent for the sole glorification of the state. The Party, rather than alienate them from its cause, wished to utilize their literary talents for its own purposes. To this category belonged a group of non-proletarian writers who found the manifestation of their convictions in the activities of Poputchiki (the fellow-travellers). Many new writers from all walks of life appeared on the literary scene, formed many different literary groups and proclaimed their own aesthetic values and political loyalties. The result was complete anarchy in literature, demonstrated by the rise and fall of such literary and cultural organizations as Vserossiiskaia Assotsiatsiia Proletarskikh Pisatelei, known as VAPP, 1921-1932 (the All-Russian Association of Proletarian Writers); Proletarskaia Kultura, 1917-1923 (the Proletcult); Kuznitsa, 1920-1930 (the Smithy); Pereval, 1924-1930 (the Pass); Rossiiskaia Assotsiatsiia Proletarskikh Pisatelei, known as RAPP, 1928-1932 (the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers), to mention only a few of the most important ones. However, this relative freedom lasted only until 1929, a year which marks the end of the New Economic Policy. During that year Stalin finally achieved indisputable control of the Party and decided, forthwith, to effect the revolutionary transformation of society and introduce the most detailed regulations in all walks of life. "Hence, just as the peasants were to be collectivized, so the writers and the intellectuals in general were to be 'bolshevized', according to the slogan of the day."[4]

[4]Max Hayward and Leopold Labedz (eds.), Literature and Revolution in Soviet Russia 1917-1962 (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. ix-x.

One of the first organizations, and for a few years the leading one, that emerged soon after the Revolution was the Proletkult, which was responsible for organizing thousands of literary and artistic studios for workers. The most prominent members of the organization were such writers, poets, and political leaders as Maxim Gorky, Anatolii Lunacharskii, M. Gerasimov, S. Rodov, V. Kazin, and others. Its chief organizer and theoretician was Aleksandr Bogdanov, a politician, sociologist, and economist.

Although the official date of the origin of the Proletkult is regarded to be 1917, in reality it came into being in the last decade of the nineteenth century under the leadership of A. Bogdanov. In Tula, Russia, together with the factory workers, Bazarov and Savelev, he organized a worker's group and, in 1909 and 1910 respectively, he organized similar groups in Capri and Bologna. In 1911 Bogdanov, in his treatise Kul'turnye zadachi nashego vremeni [(Cultural Tasks of Our Times) -- my translation], formulated his concept of the proletarian culture and literature, which later became the official theory of the Proletkult organization. In the treatise he claimed that proletarian culture is a classless culture, and criticized Plekhanov and Lenin for equating the concept of culture with that of Marxism. He rejected the idea that the workers must study the principles of Marxian scientific socialism, for, according to him, the workers were capable of arriving independently at the same conclusions. Bogdanov was against the transplantation of Marx's ideas among the workers, since such a transplantation, in his view, implied distrust of that class.

During its organizational meetings the members discussed such burning questions as the role of the writer in the proletarian society,

the proletariat and art, the attitude towards the heritage of the past literature and the still existing bourgeois literature; and, finally, the main problem -- leadership and hegemony of the proletariat in the realm of artistic and cultural creative work in general. Its first official publication, Proletarskaia kul'tura (The Proletarian Culture), appeared in 1918 and dealt with the issue concerning the role of the writer. This publication was the instrument of splitting the organization into two factions. One faction believed that the proletarian writer should have complete mastery of the technique of writing; in other words, he should be a professional in his field. Another faction believed that a writer of the working class background must remain a worker.[5] According to the latter group, professionalism leads to declassification and a breaking away of the writer from his roots of origin. They also argued that, in the past, too many writers and poets, such as the futurists and imagists, under the wing of the proletariat propagated their own ideologies.

Despite internal disagreements, the Proletkult enjoyed the hegemony in the literary field for quite a few years. One of the reasons for its survival was that all its members were united by one goal, to create proletarian literature serving primarily the working class. Bogdanov believed that for the present literature had a primary responsibility to the working class (by origin), since the workers took a leading role in the Revolution. The organization wanted to create their own art and culture beginning with the revolutionary period. Bogdanov, while acclaiming that the proletariat was the legitimate heir of all the

[5]Quoted from M. Farber, Sovetskaia literatura pervykh let revoliutsii 1917-1920 gg. (Moskva: Izd-vo Vysshaia shkola, 1966), p. 40.

achievements of the Russian literary heritage, concluded, nevertheless, that the bourgeois art had a bad influence on the proletarian art. His view was exactly opposite to the one held by Lenin. Lenin not only advocated the assimilation of the past literary heritage with the proletarian literature, but insisted that the literature of the so-called critical realism be drawn into the construction of socialism. Under Bogdanov's leadership, the Proletkult attempted to dominate and control all spheres of Soviet culture. Lenin, however, denied that there should be such a monopoly over culture by the "experts" of the proletarian culture, and, due to this intervention, the organization failed to assert its control over any sphere of Soviet cultural activity.

Another, and perhaps the most important point over which Lenin disagreed with the Proletkultists, was the role of the Party in the literary organization. Leading spokesmen for the Proletkult believed that it could flourish and achieve its aims only if it was completely independent of the control of the Party.

> Art is a part of the ideology of a class, an element of its class-consciousness, hence an organized form of a class life, a means of uniting and welding together class forces.[6]

However, an autonomous organization which the Proletkult leaders tried to create was not very popular with the Party, for it meant a complete loss of the Party's control over literature.

Until 1920 the Party supported the Proletkult, however, after its organizational meeting, it became obvious that the Party could not

[6]Quoted from H. Borland, Soviet Literary Theory and Practice During the First Five-Year Plan 1928-32 p. 3.

exercise any influence over it. The Party tried to destroy it and made it a favorite target of attack until 1923, when it was virtually forced out of existence. What was the role of the Proletkult in the proletarian society? F.W. Kalinin, student and follower of Bogdanov, expressed its task this way:[7]

> Советское правительство «обрабатывает гигантскую гору, стремясь придать ей социалистическую форму», но, так как гора классово неоднородна, «неизбежны осыпи». Чтобы облегчить Советскому правительству строительство этой горы, Пролеткульт «должен создать тип работы лабораторно-студийный и там по возможности изолировать пролетариат от привходящих буржуазных влияний... У подножия этой горы - лепить форму-модель из такого вязкого материала, как пролетариат..., и эта форма-модель должна служить образцом, по которому легче выравниваться гигантской горе Рабоче-Крестьянского Правительства».[7]

The regular Party criticism of the Proletkult gave a good indication as to what was expected of literature in the future. Many of its members realized that it was impossible for them to survive without the support of the Party, and as a result, they began to break away from the organization. At the beginning, a group of poets and writers, such as M. Gerasimov, G. Sonnikov, S. Rodov, S. Obradovich, V. Kazin, and others organized themselves around the literary organ Gorn (The Furnace), and in 1920 they adopted the official name, Kuznitsa. It was a creative group of writers who wanted to establish a literary center for the proletarian culture. Like the previous organization, they claimed to be the only "true" proletarian organization, declaring that the "proletarian art is the prism in which the personality of a class is concentrated,

[7] L.M. Farber, Sovetskaia literatura pervykh let revoliutsii 1917-1920 gg. p. 51.

a mirror in which the working masses can see themselves."[8]

Emphasizing materialistic and collectivist points of view, they glorified work, iron and steel, and especially the factory. Another theme of Kuznitsa was space and the cosmos. In other words, their poetry was a romantic depiction of the social and political happenings in Russia. However, at the beginning of 1921, Kuznitsa started to crumble. The chief cause of that was the changes that came about in the country. NEP (New Economic Policy) was introduced, and the proletarian poets, full of zeal about the Revolution, found themselves unable to adopt to the changes. Many of them thought that the partial return to private enterprise meant defeat of the Revolution and its achievements. Kuznitsa ceased to function at the end of the Civil War with which it identified itself.

Another literary organization founded in 1920 at the All-Russian Congress was VAPP. This organization claimed that it would stand guard over a clear Communist ideology in proletarian literature and protect it from the influences of the other reactionary groups who, under a mask of the Revolution, were, in reality, counter-revolutionaries. Its leadership was made up of G. Lelevich, S. Rodov, and I. Vardin. It was the principal proletarian organization until 1928. VAPP was chiefly known for its polemics with the Poputchiki. These non-proletarian writers were not an organized group, but gifted individuals who, while still being loyal to the Soviet regime, wished to retain independence in the literary activity. Typical fellow-travellers were B. Pilniak, V. Ivanov, L. Leonov, M. Tikhonov, and Isaak Babel. Because they chose to show

[8]Quoted from H. Borland, Soviet Literary Theory and Practice During the First Five-Year Plan, 1928-32 p. 5.

Soviet reality as they saw it, which was not always according to Party taste, they were not treated as the loyal oppositionists, but as implacable opponents. VAPP resolved to wage a decisive war against the anti-revolutionary elements as they called them. In fact it was taking upon itself the responsibility to deal with what it considered revolutionary deviates, which, in its view, had threatened to undermine the authority of the Party over literature.

Bukharin, a prominent member of the Party and editor of Pravda, and Lunacharskii, a Commissar of Education, during an All-Union Conference of the Proletarian Writers in 1925, acted as mediators between the VAPP and Poputchiki. Bukharin favoured general leadership and keen competition among writers. Lunacharskii supported Bukharin's view and emphasized that under no circumstances must Poputchiki be alienated from the proletarian literature. The Congress also stressed the fact that the Party would not recognize the hegemony of any literary organization and warned that in the future no literary organization was to claim leadership.

The attack of VAPP on Poputchiki assumed such proportions that it caused the split within the organization. Many of the young poets and writers of the Molodaia gvardiia (The Young Guards) group who belonged to VAPP disagreed with the organizational policy and, finally, broke away from it and formed a new literary circle Pereval in 1923 under the auspices of the editor of the magazine Krasnaia nov (Red Virgin Soil), A. Voronskii. Voronskii is mostly known for his views on proletarian culture, which, according to him, was inconceivable at the time. Although he never precluded the possibility of its existence, he insisted that it would materialize only with the advent of Communism. He urged, among

other things, that the proletarian writers learn from and merge with the Poputchiki. Voronskii also contended that, although bourgeois literature and culture was alien to that of the proletarian, at the moment it was still predominant.

> There is not and there cannot be a proletarian art during the transitional epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The task of this epoch in the domain of culture demands that the proletariat first of all master the technology, science, and art of the past centuries. Hence, as the first order of business, we must take up the question not of creating proletarian art, but of creating such revolutionary traditional art as would, through the critical assimilation of all previous acquisitions and achievements, assist the proletariat in the winning victory over the bourgeoisie.[9]

Although Voronskii was never really committed to Pereval, he was still its spiritual leader and spokesman. This circle included such members as M. Svetlov, M. Golodnyi, E. Bagritskii, G. Ognev, I. Kataev, and others. Free from the ambitious claims, members of Pereval became known as one of the most liberal organizations. Although they welcomed the Party guidelines in literature, they were against the ideological conformity and, furthermore, respected the writer's prerogative to express the individual point of view in his work. They insisted that the aesthetic feeling of a writer should be in harmony with the social order of the day, but refrained from dictating to him the themes and methods of presentation. They advocated the study of literary heritage and, in fact, their motto became the objective portrayal of reality in the best traditions of realism of Russian and world literatures.

However, despite its good intentions, the organization failed to

[9]Quoted from H. Ermolaev, Soviet Literary Theories 1917-1934. The Genesis of Socialist Realism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 38.

establish for itself a meaningful place in literature; the writers broke away and went their own ways. It was becoming more and more difficult for them to survive in any organization because of the Party's scrutiny over them. The Party demanded ideological conformity of literature and all organizations. The life of the literary organizations was coming to an end. Pereval's turn came in the late 1920's.

As other literary organizations were being formed after the Revolution, it became obvious that the Party kept a watchful eye over each one of them. The literary groups, as a result, fought for the support of the Party and eliminated one another by virtue of competition for the Party favours. At the same time, however, they were becoming more and more radical without realizing that they were undermining the control of the Party over them. Despite the innumerable literary theories and policies that these organizations tried to bring forth, most of the burning questions were still left unsolved as late as 1928. The question of leadership, for instance, of the proletarian literature remained to be solved. The role of the peasantry in the workers and peasants societies was hardly touched upon. Because a large number of members of the above mentioned organizations consisted of the working class, they were anxious to emphasize the leading role of the workers in both the Revolution and in the building of the new society and paid little attention to what was happening in the rural areas. The Party realized, however, that its strength depended on the equal support of both peasants and workers, and was eager to see that the peasants were given an equal place and importance with the proletarian workers in literature. The writers were instructed to visit rural areas and study the lives of the peasants, help them to become more aware of the socialist reality -- in other words, to

be their pedagogues. As Yurii Libeninskii states:

> One can write about whatever one pleases, depicting either worker or intellectual. But in describing the most remote corner of actuality, one must not lose that great feeling of the country in which we are moving a socialist revolution; and it is this feeling of the leading role of the proletariat in relation to the peasantry which the resolution of the Central Committee points out. This is the first and compulsory condition for every proletarian writer.[10]

Thus, the necessity to create a workers' and peasants' literature was still to be fulfilled; but neither the function of the proletarian writer nor the form of proletarian literature was explicitly determined. Any development, however, must emphasize mass education, propagate current government policies, and should include literary merits.

As the Party watched carefully the rise and fall of different literary organizations, in 1928, it decided to take a definite stand toward them. During the VAPP conference, under the direction of the Party, another literary organization was formed -- RAPP. The membership included such writers as Y. Libedinskii, D. Furmanov, A. Fadeev, V. Kirshon; its chief exponent was the critic L. Averbakh. The organization was made up of able writers and critics who easily dominated other literary organizations, and due to the support of the Party, it soon became one of the most important organizations. The creation of RAPP coincided with the establishment of the First Five-Year Economic Plan. The main purpose of the Plan was to create heavy-tempo industrialization with emphasis on heavy industry. But the Plan was not restricted to industry alone. It was designed to encompass other areas of social life and

[10]Quoted from H. Borland, Soviet Literary Theory and Practice During the First Five-Year Plan 1928-32, pp. 33-34.

literature as well. The task of literature was to take a leading part in creating a new society and the New Man. The writer's duty was, according to a Central Committee as quoted by Libedinskii, to present

> . . . a picture of the Communist alteration of the world, man's own alteration and the creation of the new Communist man -- here, comrades, is the task of the proletarian literature; here is our Five-Year Plan.[11]

The post-revolutionary period in Russian literature was that of the search for self-identity and self-realization. It evolved from specific conditions, chiefly, the October Revolution of 1917, which brought about the changes in the thoughts of the people. The literature in reflecting these thoughts became more social and political in character. Therefore, the changes in literature were not due to the literary factors as was usually the case in the pre-revolutionary period, but, primarily, due to the social and political changes. Russian literature had not only mirrored the contemporary society, as can be seen, for example, in the writings of such writers as Turgenev, Goncharov, Hertzen and others; it also established new aesthetic values during the XIX century. The post-revolutionary literature, by severing all ties with the heritage of past literature, did not have enough time to replace it with new styles of expression. However, it should be mentioned that there appeared at that time, new literary movements such as Futurism, Constructivism, and Imagism, which sought new ways of expression, as well as a Formalistic School of literary criticism which aspired to systematize literary scholarship as a distinct and integrated field of intellectual

[11]Quoted from H. Borland, Soviet Literary Theory and Practice During the First Five-Year Plan 1928-32 p. 34.

endeavour. But soon these literary movements and the Formalist School of criticism were forced out of existence under the pretext that they were unable to resolve the problem of revolutionary art. Although here again, no matter how apolitical or pro-social literature is, it still has to follow a certain artistic norm which would differentiate it from mere history. Many writers and poets continued to write in the realistic, romantic, and symbolistic moods at the initial stages of the post-revolutionary period. But as time progressed, the ideological importance of literature, imposed on the writers by men of politics, began to over-power its aesthetic importance. The men of politics dictated to the men of letters the method by which they should express themselves in order to become proletariat writers. Due to such interference of the Party, poets and writers never really acquired a complete freedom of imagination. They were forced to view reality from the ideological bias. Such is the general characterization of the literary trends of the revolutionary period.

However, before fabrication and dogmatism had become an everlasting fixture of the Russian literature, the writers and poets, soon after the Revolution, composed works of literature that were full of genuine pride and enthusiasm for the Revolution and its achievements, for Russia and its people. "It was a period of literary excitement, of many contending movements with their strident manifestoes, of blatant nonsense and brilliant theorizing."[12]

In connection with the above discussion we will now attempt to

[12]Earnest J. Simmons, Russian Fiction and Soviet Ideology p. 2.

determine the position that M.A. Sholokhov, who is considered one of the foremost Soviet writers, retained in the light of his literary practice. Sholokhov made his literary debut in 1923 with the publication of the short feuilleton "Ispytanie" (The Test) in the newspaper Iunosheskaia pravda [(The Young People's Truth) -- my translation] but gradually he began concentrating on the serious topics for his short stories. The ideas propounded in his stories were evoked by the Revolution and the Civil War. They are characterized by the single theme which was essentially the depiction of the Civil War, the lives of the cossacks, the cossack rebellions, and the tragedy of starving people. The objectivity with which he treats the theme is the salient feature of some of his stories. However, he was convinced that literature at that time could not be neutral, and so his sympathies lay with the Revolution. But his sympathy for the Revolution did not overshadow his devotion at that time to the independence of art.

The cossack-peasant, as shown by Sholokhov, in his stories, was slowly acquiring a special status in society -- he was becoming a new social force which participated actively in the political and economic structure of the Soviet state. During the Civil War, the cossacks instinctively felt the aim and meaning of the struggle. For them it was not a blind struggle, but a movement directed towards the destruction of one class and establishment of the rule of another. Sholokhov displays a writer's freedom in regard to the depiction of people. Some of the characters of his stories are portrayed objectively, whether they be enemies or sympathizers of the Revolution. His cossacks are anarchists, kulaks greedy for material possessions, and rebels, but they all feel the righteousness of their convictions. For example, in the story "Put'-

dorozhen'ka", Sholokhov portrays an old religious man who turns rebel. His passion for rebellion after a while acquires a definite social protest and direction. Alexandr IV may symbolize the rebirth of the old and the backward rather than the new type of the revolutionary cossack. In this story there is a gradation: in a sense, a subsidence of the "spontaneous" and the growth of the conscious Communist "beginnings".

Particularly, the process of crises and involvement of the peasants in the Civil War is clearly depicted through women. At the beginning they are shown as the indifferent observers; however, later, they change into active participants. At first, the women rebel indirectly by helping their sons escape to the Bolshevik camp, but as time progresses, their resistance becomes more conscious and clear. At the same time, their rebellion is of a very personal nature: it is directed against the harsh treatment given them by their husbands and against the traditional opinions that the society held of women as inferior human beings. The author shows the resistance at times from the most unexpected side --the comical.

There are many scenes of murder, violence, and hatred in Sholokhov's stories -- father versus son, son versus father, husband versus wife, brother versus brother. Although at times, the conflicts and their outcomes are exaggerated, thus revealing a degree of subjectivity on the part of the author, one must, nevertheless, keep in mind the fact that these stories were written by a young proletarian writer full of idealistic fervor for the new regime. Sholokhov has the ability to show the inner life of the cossacks through their deeds and actions with the emphasis on their brutality and animalism. As a result, their speech is sharp and expressive. The author does not give us any psychological

analysis, he only projects the dry cruelty of the harsh reality. Therefore, the emphasis on brutality is shown not for its own sake, but as the result of the author's insistence on the faithful depiction of the experience of his youthful years. In 1934 Sholokhov wrote in the preface to the English edition of his book Tikhii Don:

> ... я думаю, что плох был бы тот писатель, который прикрашивал бы действительность в прямой ущерб правде и щадил бы чувствительность читателя из ложного желания приспособиться к нему.[13]

A common thread runs through his works -- born into the new society is a New Man whose path is not clearly defined, but who, in the near future, will move forth to form cadres of the "builders of life".

The secret of the author's success was his knowledge of the people about whom he writes. He didn't have to condescend to their level in order to understand them. Sholokhov grew up with the people he described. Born into a low middle class family, the future writer was only twelve years old when the Revolution came about, and fifteen when the Civil War broke out in the Don area. During the Civil War he joined a food-requisitioning detachment of the Red Army. Later, in an autobiographical sketch he wrote about this: "We chased the bands [of brigands] who controlled the Don until 1922 and they chased us".[14] From the very start he joined the side of the poor peasant and his standpoint remained unchanged as he proved by means of his early stories and later works.

[13] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie sochinenii (Moskva: Izd-vo TSKVLKSM Molodaia gvardiia, 1958) t. 8, p. 90.

[14] D.H. Stewart, Mikhail Sholokhov. A Critical Introduction (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1967), p. 19.

Having briefly outlined Sholokhov's literary products during the revolutionary period, I shall now return to my original task, i.e., to determine which literary group mentioned above, if any, had the most influence upon the writer. In 1922 Sholokhov arrived in Moscow to begin his literary activity. In April, 1922 a group of Moscovite Komsomol members founded a journal Molodaia gvardiia (Young Guards) whose main slogans were -- Work, Study, and Creativity. To that group belonged such poets and writers as Alexandr Bezymenskii, Mikhail Svetlov, Vasilii Kudashev, and others. A year previous to that, another newspaper was founded under the auspices of the Central Committee and the Moscow Komsomol division Iunosheskaia pravda (Young People's Truth), whose chief editor was A. Zharov. It was in this paper that Sholokhov's first story "Ispytanie" was published. However, thematically, his stories were closer to yet another publication Zhurnal krasnoi molodezhi [(The Journal of the Red Youth) -- my translation] whose chief editor was Vasilii Kudashev, an active member of Molodaia gvardiia. Due to Sholokhov's close friendship with Kudashev, he often attended literary meetings of that group. As mentioned earlier, the leading members of Molodaia gvardiia group formed another literary circle Pereval, but we do not have sufficient information as to what happened to Sholokhov at that time.

Until now, Russian as well as Western critics have neglected to assert which of the existing literary schools influenced Sholokhov's early writings. This is partly due to the lack of information of Sholokhov's activities in Moscow at the time, and partly due to Sholokhov's reluctance to reveal the information, although we know that he was a member of VAPP. It is my firm belief that he was closer to the theories of Pereval than to any others. The fact that he belonged to

Molodaia gvardiia and that later, most of its members left it to join Pereval, seems to confirm my allegation. Sholokhov may not have been an active member, for his reputation as a writer was not yet established, but there is a strong possibility that he attended the meetings. At that time Sholokhov was young, independent, and susceptible to any influence. The fact that Pereval was in favour of the objective depiction of reality may have appealed to him mostly, for it allowed freedom of expression. Keeping in mind the critical evaluations of Sholokhov's early stories of the 1920's, objectivity is the salient feature of some of the stories. In them the author does not assume the role of the pedagogue, even though it is quite clear where his sympathies lie. In accordance with Pereval theories, he does not use his art for utilitarian purposes. Even though some of these stories do have moral implications, they were the result of the author's own convictions, rather than the Party directives. Consequently, Sholokhov, together with other writers, was accused by Voronov, a member of the Leningrad proletarian group, Zakal (the Tempering), of being "passive and contemplative".[15]

In 1931, only 5500 copies of Sholokhov's short stories were published in the Soviet Union. Considering the size of the reading public, the number is very insignificant. What was the reason for the lack of popularity? Presently, Sholokhov is attempting to justify it by their lack of artistic value. However, if we judge other Russian writers' works of that period by artistic criteria, we find that many of them are not superior to Sholokhov's, though they enjoyed a greater popularity.

[15] H. Ermolaev, Soviet Literary Theories 1917-1934. The Genesis of Socialist Realism, p. 104.

The cause lies much deeper, however. In the 1930's Stalin tried to consolidate his power in the Soviet Union. Anyone opposing the regime was ruthlessly liquidated. Radical "literature" that was on the side of the regime was used as the chief vehicle for the indoctrination of the people, while the literature of the passive and contemplative writers was conveniently ignored. Sholokhov's stories concentrated on the depiction of the contemporary man, who was also an everchanging creature, and as a result, could not be used as a model upon which the Bolshevik character could be molded. Despite his youth, Sholokhov was, to a large degree, a sober and realistic writer. Depicting the cossacks as confirmed Communists was unrealistic, and he was well aware of this, since they never were politically-minded people. What the author does stress, however, is the fact that the peasant way of life was gone, never to return. The Revolution and the Civil War awakened the peasant from his lethargy and brought about profound changes in his mode of life and in his way of thinking. In the next chapter we shall examine, from the literary point of view, how the author depicts the moving force that caused these changes.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND ASPECTS OF LITERARY STYLISTICS OF DONSKIE RASSKAZY

Classification of the Hero: Types and Variations

In the collection of short stories Donskie rasskazy, Sholokhov recreated through the imaginative means a comprehensive picture of the world in which he lived. The stories are concerned chiefly with man's relationship with his fellow man against the background of the Civil War, the expression of fundamental instincts and emotions of man at the time of crisis, and with a new form of idealism which emerged as the result of the social and political changes in Russia as a whole.

Western and Soviet critics of Sholokhov's works have neglected to provide the detailed analysis of his short stories in favor of his later and more mature works. Soviet critics hail Sholokhov's early stories as a glorification of the Revolution and the rise of the revolutionary consciousness of the Don peasant-cossacks. They substantiate such an evaluation by exploiting the underlined theme of the stories: the irreconcilable struggle between the rich and the poor and by the fact that most of the poor peasants rallied to the new regime. The popular approach to the analysis of the short stories is reflected in V. Gura's book Zhizn' i Tvorchestvo M.A. Sholokhova. In his stories, Sholokhov, according to the critic,

> ...реалистически зрело, с идейных позиций писателя нового мира объясняет социальный смысл событий происходивших на Дону в первые годы становления Советской власти, ...

> Гуманистическую сущность революционной борбы, обаяние, доброту, чуткость казаков, которые боролись за Советскую власть, Шолохов противопоставляет бешеной, звериной злобе врагов. Реакционная часть казачества-белогвардейцы, казачьи офицеры, кулаки, белобандиты-отставая собственнические интересы, сословные привилегии, проявляют хищную жестокость, звериную дикость и невежество.[16]

Another major Soviet critic of Sholokhov's works, L. Iakimenko, echoes Gura's evaluations in his book, Tvorchestvo M.A. Sholokhova.

> И, словно страстный всепроникающий мотив, прошло через все его произведения, начиная с первых рассказов, отрицание мира, основанного на слепом эгоизме, на неравенстве, на иссушающей власти денег, на звериной борьбе за место в жизни.[17]

While there can be no doubt about Sholokhov's sincerity and genuineness of feeling towards the new regime, he was able to provide in some of the stories the diversity and richness of human character, a fact that is completely ignored by the Soviet critics. They dwell on the salient general characteristics of the stories from the Soviet point of view, such as the author's "correct" depiction of the class struggle of the cossacks and his humanistic treatment of the poor revolutionary peasants. Western critics such as D.H. Stewart and others, while being more objective in their analyses and recognizing some of the artistic achievements of the author, have also limited themselves to the analysis of the general characteristics of the stories. We do not pretend to provide a complete

[16] V. Gura, Zhizn' i tvorchestvo M.A. Sholokhova (Moskva: Gos. uchpedagog izd-vo ministerstva prosveshcheniia RSFSR, 1960), p. 35.

[17] L. Iakimenko, Tvorchestvo M.A. Sholokhova (Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1964), p. 46.

analysis of the stories; I shall attempt, however, to present a more concentrated and detailed study of the characters, motifs and ideas expressed, and the manner of their treatment.

The characters depicted in Sholokhov's early stories act from everyday motives: social conditions, petty jealousy, family affections, desire for wealth, and love between man and woman. Component elements of the stories are the surroundings in which the hero acts, nature, dialogues, lyrical digressions, but the most important is the insistence upon the action, on the exposing of the hero in action, and on individual deeds. But before going into the analyses of the characters, we shall give their general descriptions.

The cossack population of the Don region consisted, as depicted by the author, of two classes, the rich and the poor. The common theme is that the rich try to maintain their way of living and the poor try to abolish it. Due to such attitudes, the heroes of these stories mark the author's consistent tendency to produce two distinct categories of beings: the positive and the negative. The criteria that determine whether they are positive or negative is their relationship to the state: if they sympathize with the old regime, they are automatically considered an enemy of the new regime and they have therefore outlived their time and value; if they sympathize with the new regime, they are considered the creators of the new and better society, and the future belongs to them. Those belonging to the negative category have solidified into the anonymous face of the White Army and the well-to-do cossacks; those belonging to the positive are the young men, a few middle age men and emancipated women. We should add here that Sholokhov, with the exception of Tikhii Don, has never outgrown his early distinction between "good"

and "bad guys". Because the author was pledged to political allegiance, ideology plays a large part in his stories. Most of the stories are permeated with the ideological slogans and the people are arranged into two categories: those who agree with the ideology and those who reject it.

Most of the people described lack the distinct aroma of personality; therefore each is an extension of the other. On this basis, we shall attempt to demonstrate that the personages in Sholokhov's stories are types, rather than individuals. They become, to a large extent, not real people, but rather symbolic forces engaged in a political and moral struggle and do not behave as the people one might encounter in real life. The motifs which impel these personages usually have some direct reference to moral law or are a result of its violation. Sholokhov portrays two types of people, each of which is characterized by a distinct mode of behavior and speech. Stupidity, greed and selfishness are the characteristics which are manifested in one type and are in a constant state of conflict with righteousness, love and spiritual illumination which are manifested in the other type. Therefore the two types represent a mythical dichotomy: evil versus good. However, despite the fact that these types represent symbolic forces, they reflect the moral and political attitudes so clearly and convincingly that one is tempted to believe in the real existence of such characters, even though they are often schematized and oversimplified.

Sholokhov demonstrates the development of a character under the pressure of particular circumstances. The framework of Sholokhov's stories confined the stories to the unfolding of an elemental passion which usually erupts at a critical moment in the life of the person

a wife's confession to being a spy for the enemy drives her husband to killing her; son's admittance of belonging to the Komsomol organization angers kulak-father to such a degree that he kills his own son, and so on. The writer shows that a new phase of emotional tendency, a new attitude towards life emerged on the scene after the Revolution; the age of quick and passionate feeling came about. The personages do not repress their emotions; on the contrary, they allow themselves to be carried away with their feelings. Toleration is also unknown -- the old way of life suddenly became intolerable for the poor peasants, and the new way of life for the rich peasants. In his early stories Sholokhov through his characters, mirrors a vigorous age in the lives of the Don cossacks.

Methods of Characterization

The author reveals his heroes by many different methods. In the story "Rodinka" he uses the combination of direct and indirect description. Sholokhov first of all describes the material surroundings in which the main hero Nikolai Koshevoi is found. We learn from them that Nikolai is a soldier of the Red Army, that he is eighteen years old, a member of the Komsomol and a commander of an escadron. Then the author describes Nikolai's physical appearance in such a way that he reveals the hero's inner qualities of character and justifies him for being a commander at such a young age. Finally he reinforces the above statements by providing opinions of other people about Nikolai.

На столе гильзы патронные, пахнущие горевшим порохом, баранья кость, полевая карта, сводка, уздечка наборная

с душком лошадиного пота, краюха хлеба. Все это на столе, а на лавке тесаной, заплесневевшей от сырой стены, спиной плотно к подоконнику прижавшись, Миколка Кошевой, командир эскадрона сидит. Карандаш в пальцах его иззябших, недвижимых. Рядом с давнишними плакатами, распластанными на столе, - анкета, наполовину заполненная. Шершавый лист скупо рассказывает: Кошевой Николай. Командир эскадрона. Землероб. Член РКСМ.

Против графы „возраст" карандаш медленно выводит: 18 лет.

Плечист Никола, не по летам выглядит. Старят его глаза в морщинках лучистых и спина, по-стариковски сутулая.[18]

.

- Мальчишка ведь, пацанек, куга зеленая, - говорят шутя в эскадроне, - а подыщи другого, кто бы сумел почти без урона ликвидировать две банды и полгода водить эскадрон в бои и схватки не хуже любого старого командира![19]

In the story "Chervotochina", the main character is revealed through the description of his physical appearance. It should be noted that a tone of sarcasm is detected in the description. We learn that his physical appearance resembles that of a kulak, but he dresses and behaves like a simple peasant.

Яков Алексеевич - старинной ковки человек: ширококостый, сутуловатый; борода как новый просяной веник - до обидного похож на того кулака, которого досужие художники рисуют на последних страницах газет. Одним не схож - одеждой. Кулаку, по занимаемой должности, непременно полагается жилетка и сапоги с рыпом, а Яков Алексеевич летом ходит в холщевой рубахе, распоясавшись и босой.[20]

In the story "Bakhchevnik" the main character is revealed through the

[18] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie sochinenii. Rasskazy (Moskva: Goslitizdat, 1956), t. 1, p. 11.

[19] Ibid., p. 11.

[20] Ibid., p. 232.

description of his previous behaviour, his occupation, and the manner of his conversation with the members of his family. We learn that during the war he was on the side of the Whites and, after his return home, he was unusually serious and closed within himself. However, he has been promoted to be the commandant and the promotion has made him very happy. We also learn that he is a very strict father and is very angry that his son joined the Komsomol organization, for the father's superiors disapproved of his son's political views.

In the short story, "O Donprodkome i zlokliucheniakh zamestitelia Donprodkomissara tovarishcha Ptitsyna," the main character, who is also a narrator of the story, reveals himself by self-introduction. In another story, "O Kolchake, krapive i prochem," the narrator reveals himself through his action and the manner of his speech. Similar approaches are seen in the story "Semeinyi chelovek".

Young men. Having given examples of the manner of the introduction of the characters, we shall analyze them as they are presented in the stories. Sholokhov embodies the ideals of the new age mostly in the characters of children, and the young and middle-aged men. The most common traites that are found in the gallery of the portraits of these people are their hatred of the privileged few and their sincere concern for the underprivileged many. Most of the young men have a common background, they are either orphans working for the kulaks and earning miserly wages or they come from very poor families. By the age of fifteen or seventeen they already possess the common sense acquired through the hard experiences in life. A decisive role in their lives is played by the Komsomol and the Party members who have arrived in the region from the outside.

These people usually introduce the local men to the new ideas and a special literature concerning their future life and that of a newly established society. Having been exposed to the new ideas, their lives acquire a definite aim and they do not allow anything to stand in their way to achieve it. An example of such a young man is Grigorii Frolov in the story "Pastukh". He is a nineteen year old orphan, a member of the Komsomol, who has been elected by the local people to be a public herdsman. His life has been very difficult, but he concentrates on the better future which, he is certain, will come. Grigorii is very idealistic and eager to learn. In his free time he reads newspapers and political literature given to him by the secretary of the Komsomol. With the help of this literature he came to realize that as long as the rich are in power the lot of the poor will not change. He wants to go away and get a proper education so that he can return and awaken the local people from their "sleep". Grigorii is always ready and willing to protect the rights of the poor, to fight for law and justice. When he finds out that kulaks took the most fertile land for themselves, he sends a letter to the newspaper Krasnaia pravda and exposes their deeds.

However, Grigorii does not live long enough to have his dream realized, for he is killed by the kulaks. But at the same time the author underlines that even though Grishka is dead, his ideals did not die with him. The story ends with Grigorii's young sister Dunia walking with a book about Lenin towards the city where the Soviet government is in power and where the members of the proletariat have an opportunity to learn how to rule the republic. The characters of young men with similar virtues can be found in the stories "Batraki", "Smertnyi vrag" and others. However, Sholokhov does not limit the depiction of a

positive hero, the New Man, to the poor young men only. Ignashka Bodiagin in the story "Prodkomissar" is a son of a kulak, but, in spite of his background, he also develops a sincere concern for the underprivileged people, and like Grigorii, he is imbued with morally and spiritually ideal qualities. As a child he was exposed to the cruel ways in which his father treated hired men. Once Ignat took the side of the peasants and for that he was beaten and thrown out of the house. We do not know where he goes, but after many years he returns as an inspector to collect the grain for the state. On his return the son finds his father is even a worse villain than when he left him. He orders that his father be shot for refusing to give the state the required quota of grain. However, Ignat is not considered a murderer by any means for what he does, because it is done for the good of the state and the common people. But Ignat does not only kill for what he believes; he sacrifices his own life for it; he gives up his own life to save that of a child. By the death of Ignat, Sholokhov points out the heroic, unassuming self-sacrifice of people for their beliefs during the Civil War.

Thus, as we have seen from the above examples, the young men become representatives of the expression of that idealism and ideology on which the new regime depended for its physical survival and spiritual life. In other words, the interpretation of personality is the representation of the theory. Both Ignat and Grigorii represent the utilitarian spirit of the age. Sholokhov's theory of human nature as presented in the above mentioned stories derives from the utilitarian: that is, through the characters of the young men, he takes upon himself the onus to persuade and convince his readers of the righteousness of the new regime, and to denounce the old. In the process, he

oversimplifies and schematizes the characters; they become stereotype and their ideas pallid and unconvincing.

Children. In treating children, the author attempts to convey their impressions of the surroundings and people from their points of view. Sholokhov, in the stories "Aleshkino serdtse" and "Nakhalenok", shows that children possess abundant imagination. In the story "Aleshkino serdtse" a little boy, Aleshka, has been told that the cause of so many peasants' tears is hunger. Not having the slightest notion what hunger is, he tries to imagine what it looks like.

> Алешка представлял себе его большущим безглазым человеком: идет он бездорожно, шарит руками по поселкам, хуторам, станицам, душит людей и вот-вот черствыми пальцами насмерть стиснет Алешкино сердце.[21]

A little boy, Mishka, in the story "Nakhalenok" learns from his father about a man called Lenin who formed an army of the poor people to destroy the rich. Mishka soon imagines himself running away from home and joining Lenin's army. The working of Mishka's imagination is related through his dream.

> Идет Мишка по улице, голову кверху задирает, рассматрива
> и вдруг, откуда не возьмись, шасть ему навстречу высочен
> человек в красной рубахе.
> - Ты Мишка, почему без делов шляешься? - спрашивает
> он очень ласкаво.
> - Меня дедуня пустил поиграть, - отвечает Мишка.
> - А ты знаешь, кто я такой?
> - Нет, не знаю.
> - Я - товарищ Ленин!
> У Мишки со страху колени подогнулись. Хотел тягу
> задать, но человек в красной рубахе взял его, Мишку, за
> рукав и говорит:

[21] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 45.

- Совести у тебя, Мишка, и на ломаный грош нету! Хорошо ты знаешь, что я за бедный нард воюю, а почему-то в мое войско не поступаешь?...

- Меня дедуня не пущает!... - оправдывается Мишка.

- Ну, как хочешь, - говорит товарищ Ленин, - а без тебя у меня - неуправка. Лолжон ты ко мне в войско вступить, и шабаш!...

Мишка взял его за руку и сказал очень твердо:

- Ну, ладно, я без спросу поступлю в твою войску и буду воевать за бедный народ. Но ежели дедуня меня за это зачнет хворостиной драть, тогда ты за меня заступись!...

- Обязательно заступлюсь! - сказал товарищ Ленин и с тем пошел по улице, а Мишка почувствовал, как от радости у него захватило дух, нечем дыхнуть: хочет он что-то крикнуть - язык присох ...[22]

In the stories, children become impressionable, sincere, unspoiled instruments of social and personal criticism, instinctively knowing what is good and right. After the death of his sister and mother, Aleshka hires himself to work for a very rich kulak. Once by chance he meets a politcom Sinitsyn and befriends him very quickly. Aleshka instinctively feels that Sinitsyn and the group of people to whom he was introduced are much better than the kulak for whom Aleshka works. Having suffered at the hands of kulaks many a time, Aleshka finds, for the first time in his life, a genuine friend in the person of Sinitsyn. Consequently an inseparable bond develops between them. Aleshka worships his hero and is willing to die for him in time of need.

Because children are considered unprejudiced, they are used as tools of criticism of social and personal vices. During the death of his sisters and mother, Aleshka witnesses the insatiable greediness of the next door rich neighbour for the house and other material possessions that eh dying mother may have had. The widow's desire for the

[22] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, pp. 133-134.

possessions is so strong that it completely dehumanizes her in the eyes of the little boy. As a result he sees her as a monster always ready to swallow up the prey. Centering the point of view in this manner permits the passing of judgement not only on the character but also on the class that the character represents. However, often ideological concepts are involved in passing such a judgement. In the story "Nakhalenok" a priest's son Vit'ka constantly tells his friend Mishka that he will go to hell because his father is a Communist. Because Vit'ka is only a child he could not express such thoughts on his own, but reflected the opinions of his father and those of his class.

Ideology plays a large part in the formation of Aleshka's and Mishka's characters. The boys' heroes are evidences of the good of human nature and at the same time represent something higher than themselves, the Communist Party. Both Aleshka and Mishka try to emulate them; Aleshka tries to emulate Sinitsyn, while Mishka tries to emulate his father. However, for Mishka the goodness and wisdom of his father is overshadowed by that of Lenin, who acquired, in Mishka's eyes, the stature of a Divine Man. For both boys their heroes become the ideal perfection whom both feel to be the type of all that they love, admire and would like to become.

Older people. Older people also achieve characteristic simplicity and innocence which brings them close to children. There is something very childish about the old man Aleksandr who adopted for himself the title "Aleksandr Chetvertyi". Even after being publicly flogged for the defamation of the royalty, he defiantly tells the executors of the punishment that they have not frightened him at all and for that statement

he is flogged once more. In the story "Chuzhaia krov'", the two old people are as happy by the addition of the new member into their lives as the children would be after receiving a new toy. Each tries to outdo the other to please Pet'ka.

> - Ты спишь старая?
> - А что тебе?
> - На ноги подымается наш... Ты завтра из сундука Петровы шаровары достань... Приготовь всю амуницию... Ему ить надеть нечего.
> - Сама знаю! Я ить надысь достала.
> - Ишь ты, проворная!... Полушубок-то достала?
> - Ну, а то телешом, что ш, парню ходить!
> Гаврила повозился на печке, чуть было задремал, но вспомнил и, торжествуя, поднял голову:
> - А папах? Папах, небось, забыла, старая гусыня?
> - Отвяжись! Мимо сорок разов прошел и не споткнулся, вон на гвозде другой день висит: Гаврила досадливо кашлянул и примолк.[23]

Ded Gavrila, although not a politically minded person, did not welcome the Red Army with open arms. Proud of the cossacks' heritage and their free and uninhibited way of life, he saw in the Red Army the destructive force of that tradition, and to express his defiance he wore

> ... шаровары с лампасами, с красной казачьей волей, черными нитками простроченной вдоль суконных с напуском шаровар. Чекмень надевал с гвардейским оранжевым почументом, со следами ношенных когда-то вахмистерских погон. Вешал на грудь медали и кресты, полученные за то, что служил верой и правдой; шел по воскресеньям в церковь, распахнув полы полушубка, чтоб все видали.[24]

When the head of the local Soviet asks the old man to take the medals off, he resents such an order but, obediently, in a child-like manner, takes them off.

[23] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 325.

[24] Ibid., pp. 313-314.

Была обида горькая, как полынь в цвету. Ордена снял, но обида росла в душе, лопушилась, со злобой родниться начала.[25]

In drawing the characters of the old men and children, the author places them, quite often, in humorous situations, frequently in stories where the main motif is completely free of comical situations. Very often the humorous situation is closely connected with the pathetic one. The transition from the humorous to the pathetic is perfectly natural, for humour and pathos have a close relation. The same old man Gavrila is quite beside himself when the representative from the Soviet comes to collect the grain for seeding, and his outburst of emotions creates a very humorous situation.

Белокурый, закуривая, решил:
- Оставить на семена, на прокорм, остальное забрать.
- Оценивающим хозяйским взглядом прикинул количество хлеба и повернулся к Гавриле: - Сколько десятин будешь сеять?
- Чертову лысину засею!.. - засипел Гаврила, кашляя и судорожно кривляясь. - Берите, проклятые!.. Грабьте!.. Все ваше!..
- Что ты осатанел, что ли, остепенись, дед Гаврила!.. - упрашивал председатель, махая на Гаврилу варежкой.
- Давитесь чужим добром?.. Лопайте!..[26]

In the story "Nakhalenok" the conversation between the two boys is related thus:

Витька ехидно прищурил левый глаз, сказал, стаскивая с костлявых плеч вязаную рубашечку:
- Это от золотухи, а ты - мужик, и тебя мать под забором родила!..
- А ты видал?[27]

[25] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 325.

[26] Ibid., p. 319.

[27] Ibid., p. 122.

There is a certain correlation between the upbringing of the present growing generation and that of their parents. Young people "get politics", as their parents and grandparents were accustomed to "getting religion". Sholokhov in the story "Pastukh" makes use again of a humorous device in drawing the parallel.

> Дед Игнат шапку снял, щурясь от косых солнечных лучей, ползавших по земляному полу шалаша, руку поднял - перекреститься хотел на маленький портрет Ленина, висевший в углу. Разглядел и на полдороге торопливо сунул руку за спину; сплюнул злобно.
>
> - Так - с... Иконы божьей, значит, не имеешь?..
>
> - Нет...
>
> - А это кто же на святом месте находится?
>
> - Ленин.
>
> - То-то и беда наша... Бога нетути, и хворь тут как тут... Через эти самые дела и телятки-то передохли... Охо-хо, вседержитель наш милостивий...
>
> - Теляты, дедушка, оттого дохли, что ветеринара не позвали.
>
> - Жили раньше и без ветинара вашего... Ученый ты больно уж... Лоб бы свой нечистый крестил почаще, и ветинар не нужен был бы.
>
> Михей Нестеров, ворочая глазами, выкрикнул:
>
> - Сыми с переднего угла нехристя-то!.. Через тебя, поганца, богохульщика, стадо передохло.
>
> Гришка побледнел слегка.
>
> - Дома бы распоряжались... Рот-то нечего драть... Это вождь пролетариев...[28]

In general the old men are not shown as active participants of the Civil War. Their opinions about the current life, if they have any, are not voiced in the stories. There are some exceptions, however, like the old man Lukich who refuses to give the grain to the Whites and reports their whereabouts to the Reds. But his behaviour is not the result of his political attitude, but rather the result of the White band's wild behaviour. The old man Gavrila is neither overjoyed with

[28] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 29.

the coming of the Red Army, nor does he openly resist them and the old man Frolov is more preoccupied with the behaviour of his grandson Mishka than with the life of the village.

Female characters. Interesting, but enigmatic, are the female characters. With the exception of three or four stories, we are allowed to see women only as symbols of certain phenomena in society. Beyond that they remain mysterious. The author allows them to speak as little as possible, but, paradoxical as it may seem, they are no less complete than their husbands. In the story "Bakhchevnik" we meet the wife only three times. The first time she does not speak, the second time she says only one sentence, and the third time she speaks only three sentences. In the story "Rodinka" and "Chervotochina" the woman appears on the scene only once. In the story "Krivaia stezhka" the young girl appears at the beginning of the story for a brief time; later other women characters appear, but even for a shorter length of time. Although their husbands do not speak of them, we judge them partly by the place they hold in their sons' hearts. Young men speak to their fathers curtly, evincing either petulance or justifiable aversion. To their mothers they talk with respect and consideration. Sholokhov divides female characters into two categories: the "mother-earth" woman, dependent on her husband, and the independent woman who attempts to assert her position in the society of men. Furthermore he also gives us a description of a "modern" woman, a product of the new society. The mother-earth woman does not concern herself with the political life of the country; her main concerns are her husband, children, and household duties. She is the embodiment of noble, loving and suppressed womanhood. She has no prejudices in

her heart, even though she is often neglected and beaten by her husband. Very often she plays the role of a peacemaker between her husband and her sons, who find themselves on different political sides, but sometimes she is completely oblivious of their relationship as seen in the story "Chervotochina". If she fails in her role as a peacemaker, she takes either her husband's side or her sons'. As a rule, she takes her son's side, not because her political sympathies coincide with his, but because her maternal feelings dominate her duties as a wife. An example of such a woman is seen in the story "Bakhchevnik". Anisimov's wife protects her son from the physical punishment of her husband and, against her husband's wishes, she sends food to the Red prisoners for no other reason than that her son may be somebody's prisoner and may have no one to take care of him. Another example of the mother-earth figure is shown in the story "Kolovert". The relationship among the members of this family is somewhat different from that of Anisimov. The mother is treated with respect and love by her sons and her husband. The situation changes drastically with the arrival from abroad of the third son Mishka, who is very arrogant, authoritative and disrespectful towards the rest of the family. At the beginning the mother tries to persuade her son not to be so openly defiant of his father and brothers, as well as of the Bolsheviks, for in case they become victorious, he will not be spared the inevitable fate of death. She is more concerned with his well-being than with his political sympathies. Despite the fact that her husband and other two sons sympathize with the Bolsheviks, Mishka sympathizes with the Whites; she treats them all equally.

[29] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 161.

A completely opposite character of the mother-earth woman is the one who asserts her position in the society of men. Because her place is assigned at home by nature and tradition, the moment she abandons her role she is looked upon with aversion. Such a woman is presented in the story "Shibalkovo semia". Daria agrees to spy on Reds for her lover Ignat'ev, a leader of the White band. She gains admission to the Red camp by feigning illness. While in the camp she proves herself capable of doing well any man's job and, without any difficulties, is accepted by the Red partisans. She cooks for the men, mends their clothes, and after the death of Shibalok's harness boy takes his place. Soon she becomes pregnant with Shibalok's child. During a very difficult childbirth she becomes ill and, thinking herself to be on the death bed, she confesses to Shibalok that she is a spy. Shibalok, enraged by the woman's betrayal, mercilessly beats her up. After giving birth to a child Daria asks Shibalok to spare her life so that she could raise their child and after that -- she says -- her life would be at his disposal. But Shibalok and the whole division are inexorable and Daria is killed. For the cossacks the idea of using a woman as a spy must have been a new phenomenon. If the spy would have been a man, he too would have probably met with the same fate, but since the spy was a woman, her treacherous behaviour was considered a double degradation for the cossacks, for she not only took advantage of their kindness and confidence, but she dared to defy her traditional womanly role and took a part in what was considered strictly to be man's realm of activity.

A modern woman is represented in such stories as "Nakhalenok", "Dvukhmuzhniaia", "Lazorevaia step'", and "O Kolchake, krapive i prochem". In the story "Nakhalenok" Sholokhov attempts to give an all round picture

of a Communist and his family. Thus, the family as a whole has a completely "new" and "modern" outlook on life and on the relationship among the members of the family. The wife is respected by her husband and consulted in all family affairs. However, this is not so in the story "Dvukhmuzhniaia". Anna lives with her father-in-law and helps him with the household duties. Her husband has been away with the Whites and is not heard of for many years. In the meantime a young collective farm worker offers to marry her and promises he would love and respect her. She marries him, bears a child and joins the collective farm. She is encouraged by her husband to attend all the meetings and participate in the making of decisions of the collective. However, quite unexpectedly, her first husband, Stepan, returns and asks her to return to him. After some hesitation, she returns to Stepan, but soon realizes that she has made a mistake for he does not live up to his promises. He often beats her and forbids her to take part in the community affairs. Unable to live in such humiliating conditions, Anna returns with a child to Arsenii, her second husband. Arsenii welcomes her with open arms and forgives her for leaving him and the collective. At the end of the story Anna becomes an emancipated woman; she plays an equal role with Arsenii in the community affairs and at the same time retains the role of a loved and respected wife and mother.

The problem concerning the role of a post-revolutionary woman is approached from a humorous point of view in the story "O Kolchake, krapive i prochem". After the Revolution the community, which Sholokhov describes in the story, accepts a new way of life and tries to live up to the expectations. However, the lot of a woman is the same as during pre-revolutionary times; her household duties are heavy and she is

constantly beaten by her husband. We can get a fair idea what the woman is thought of from the conversation between Fedot and Nastia. But the situation changes with the arrival of the former resident, a woman with a man's haircut, who begins to stir up all the wives against their husbands for not giving them their due respect. Nastia, from the very minute of her arrival, demands to be treated as a man's equal and meets the challenge befittingly. It is interesting to observe how the narrator compares the behaviour of the same woman during the post-revolutionary period with that of the pre-revolutionary.

> - Равноправенства захотела? Получай! Получай! Во двор вьехал, шумлю бабе:
> - Распрягай, такая-сякая!
> - Сам не барин! - и ручкой этак с порога махает.
> Я к ней и за чуб. Только что ж... Одна непристойность... Раньше, как она в страхе жила, так моргнуть, бывало, боялась, а тут ни с того, ни с чего, черк меня за бороду и разными иностранными словами...[30]

Under Nastia's influence, the wives boycott their household duties and some of them leave their husbands entirely. The husbands at first try to get along without the wives, but soon, having realized that the domestic duties are too much for them, decide to elect a representative to force their wives to return home. But the situation reverses, for this time it is the wives who beat up the representative and agree to return home only under the condition that the husbands stop using force on them and treat them as equals. The representative has no choice but to agree, and although he complains, we detect a note of pride on his part in the fact that the women were able to stand up for their rights. The whole

[30] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 308.

story is a tribute to both, the emancipated woman who takes her due place in society, and to the Revolution, which made it possible.

Structure in the Stories

Thus, as we have seen, the primary aim of the stories is to depict a specific time and place, the two social groups and the relationship between them. Now we shall study the means by which they are made effective. The impression that one carries away after reading the stories is one of vividness and of having had a real experience. The vividness and the air of reality of the stories are due, in part, to the characteristics of their external structure. Six of the twenty-two stories with which we are concerned, are told in the first person. These stories are "Shibalkovo semia", "Semeinyi chelovek", "Predsedatel' revvoensoveta", "Lazorevaia step", "O Donprodkome . . ." and "O Kolchake . . .". But there is a "double" narrator, one who listens and "records" the story; and another who "tells" the story. The subject of the latter narrator as treated by Sholokhov is directly connected with the problem of skaz, a Russian nomenclature for a narrative in which the writer is only an instrument in rewording the story as it is being told to him by an imaginary narrator. This type of narrative is more dynamic and creative than that which is written from the author's point of view because it gives the author a chance to use more natural and picturesque language, such as a colloquial expression, local jargon, and it also provides the possibility to characterize the imaginary narrator due to the above mentioned features. One of the most outstanding traits of Sholokhov's skaz-type stories is a wide use of the folklore, as it is

evident first of all in the speech of the personages.

Now we return to the subject of the listener (narrator). The listener (narrator) betrays his presence by using the personal pronoun in the first person, sometimes at the beginning and at the end of the story, as in "Semeinyi chelovek", and at times, only at the end of the story, as in "Predsedatel' . . .". In these stories the listener (narrator) himself, in his own person, plays a minor, though a more or less active part. His function is more than that of a mere listener -- he becomes emotionally attached to the narrator. Listening to the episode, he suffers that emotion, he is never a mechanical recorder of the narrator's words. In general, his sympathy is with the hero, a fact which is no less evident in many of the stories where the author does not openly intervene. In the skaz "Predsedatel' . . .", the narrator of the story, Bogatyrev, once again justifies his actions to his listener, that is, he states his reason for establishing his own "autonomous republic", an act which could be interpreted as counter-revolutionary, even though he does it for the good of the republic as a whole. The listener's (narrator's) visible pride in the narrator is illustrated by the fact that he chose the symbolic name Bogatyrev, meaning the omnipotent one, for the narrator, and this pride expressed in the last lines of the story:

> Нечем ему было супротив меня крыть, и, руку мне пожавши очень крепко, уехал он тем следом обратно.[31]

Usually the story is told to the listener (narrator) on a definite occasion under conditions involving great emotional stress. In fact, in almost all the skaz-type stories, with the exception of

[31] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 179.

"Lazorevaia step'", the narrators try to justify their actions and to reveal their side of the truth. This is well demonstrated in the story "Semeinyi chelovek". The narrator, an old man, Makashira, kills two of his sons to save his own life. He justifies his actions by the fact that he has, at home, seven more children to take care of, but at the same time he is aware of the fact that he is responsible for the death of the two children. He is probably also aware that if he repeats the incident often enough, he will convince himself that he made the only correct choice available and eventually achieve peace of mind. In this story and a few others, Sholokhov's listener (narrator) does not directly interfere, nor does he betray his emotions towards the narrator; however, it is the faithful reproduction of the episode and of the narrator's emotions which are good indicators of the "author's" stand.

The narrative stories are interesting because of their highly personalized nature and because they give us the greater illusion of authenticity and create the impression that the real author, Sholokhov himself, is present. The listener (narrator) believes his stories, consequently as he "writes them down", he shares the emotions of his characters, he grieves with Shibalok, laughs with "Kolchak", shares the wrath of Makashira, and triumphs with the self-appointed head of the republic. This type of narrative where the hero (narrator) tells his own story to a listener (narrator) gives also a greater possibility for expressions of different points of view since the listener (narrator) has, so to speak, to "accept" what is offered him. Somehow we too believe, we too suffer with them although not always necessarily sharing the same feelings with the "listener" or "narrator". Most of the stories are written from the omniscient author's point of view, which provides

the necessary information through the dramatic action of characters and the liberal use of dialogue. Also, it is through the characters, the dynamics of dialogue and action that Sholokhov shows his own relationship to reality. The author often manipulates the actions and dialogues for the purpose of persuading the reader to view the same reality, the same truth as he sees it.

Another literary device in the structure of Sholokhov's stories is the recurrence of the same types of people. After we meet in these stories a few representatives of a definite social group, having almost exactly the same traits of character of that group, and see them in different moods, grave or happy, we will be left with the feeling of complexity of their characters. Another characteristic is the author's knowledge of the people he describes. However, as was mentioned before, Sholokhov, in most of the stories, deals more with man as a type of the group of which he is a member, rather than as an individual human being. Certain characteristics of these types, because of their recurrence, stand out very clearly. The people who are on the side of the regime are portrayed as eminently modest, completely lacking in self-consciousness, rather inexpressive, but effective. The kulaks, on the other hand, are boastful, greedy and cruel. Although they are not directly described as such, it is purely by what they do and say that we reach our conclusions about them. The characters are types, and their emotions are simple and elemental, and though not deeply portrayed, they are convincingly and effectively represented. It is due, for the most part, to the personality of the author, for he can put himself in their places, see the world from their eyes, realize for himself their motives, their emotions to a

degree possible only for one who has been brought up among them.

The strong emotions and heightened moods naturally express themselves in heightened language. The language of the stories is therefore full of vitality and powerful emotions. In the story "Chuzhaia krov'", the conversation at the beginning between the old man Gavrila and his guest, whose reason for being there was to inform Gavrila of his son's whereabouts, is at best restrained. The only time when Gavrila betrays his state of emotions is when he shouts at his wife for being so impatient. However, soon he himself is unable to restrain his curiosity and when he is told that his son is dead, his speech and actions are full of emotional impact.

> - Говори: где Петро?
> - А вы разве не слыхали?
> - По разному слыхали, - отрубил Гаврила.
>
> - А ежели я не хочу этому верить?!. - багровея, захрипел Гаврила. Глаза его налились кровью и слезами. Разодрав у ворота рубаху, он голой волосатой грудью шел на оробевшего Прохора, стонал, запрокидывая потную голову: - Одного сына убить?!. Кормильца?!. Петьку мово?!. Брешешь, сукин сын!... Слышишь ты?!. Брешешь! Не верю!...[32]

The tone of his speech is emphasized by the use of question and exclamation marks. Also, often, in such strained conversations Sholokhov uses ellipses, which stand for the omissions of words which are understood, but not spoken. Often the ellipses are found in both the middle and the end of the sentence. In the above mentioned story, in the conversation between Gavrila dn Pet'ka, the author makes frequent use of ellipses.

[32]M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, pp. 317-318.

- Не держу. Поезжай!.. - бодрясь, ответил Гаврила. - Старуху обмани... скажи, что вернешься... Поживу, мол, и вернусь... а то затоскует, пропадет... один ить ты у нас был...[33]

The old man is so overcome by his emotions that he has to pause for awhile to gasp for air to help him regain self-composure through the conversation; or, perhaps he is also hoping to get an affirmative answer to his pleadings. The heightened emotions are often expressed by the choice of words that the personages use.

Notes on the Composition

The author's power of making us see what he sees is due partly to the external structure. It is due partly to the internal structure -- introduction, plot, climax, denouement. One does not have a feeling that the author wrote his stories according to a definite plan, and if he had any principle in mind it must have been naturalness. He worked instinctively and spontaneously with a strong feeling about the story on hand, rather than a definite plan of its form. It is difficult to generalize regarding the structure of his stories. One can do no more, therefore, than note a few of the methods of handling the various parts of the stories, which seem to be roughly characteristic.

Sholokhov begins his stories in different ways; however, in most of the opening paragraphs, there is the skillful interweaving of the narrative elements: time, place, people and sometimes the tragic plot

[33]M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 330.

is powerfully suggested. Sometimes he begins with the description of the setting. He does so in such stories as "Rodinka" and "Batraki" where the scene is structurally necessary, an organic part of the story. His most common opening is an account of the chief character or characters of the story, an account that is not of the whole phase of life, but merely of that small part of it with which the story is concerned. Sometimes this account takes the form of direct description as in the story "Chervotochina", or the summary of their past history as in the story "Krivaia stezhka". Sometimes the character is introduced in the dramatic way by an incident which carries forward the action of the story as in "Prodcommissar", or by the indirect way, i.e., description of the surroundings as in the story "Zherebenok". Sometimes the author begins his story with the explanation of the antecedent action as in the story "Shibalkovo semia".

Sholokhov sees the events of his stories sometimes in the purely comic spirit as in the story "O Kolchake . . .", sometimes with the mingling of laughter and tears as in the stories "Pastukh" and "Chuzhaia krov'"; however, most of the times the mood of the stories is wholly serious or tragic as in the stories "Chervotochina", "Batraki" and others.

We shall analyze the first story of the collection "Rodinka" to trace the development of the subject, which contains many of the characteristics of the other stories. The story is divided into six chapters united by one theme -- heroic death of the young commander. In the first part the author introduces the main character Nikolai Koshevoi, the young commander of an escadron. Despite his youth he is brave and commands respect of those subordinate to him. In the second part the author describes his personal life, a tragic result of civil war. Nikolai, like

any other young man of his age, has many aspirations to fulfil, but he is forced to abandon them for the time being. In the third chapter the author describes the circumstances under which Nikolai Koshevoi had to fight the White bands. Sholokhov also introduces us to the mysterious ataman who for unknown reasons started to drink heavily. The conflict of the story has now been clearly defined. In the fourth chapter the conflict between the two antagonistic sides sharpens and deepens. The meeting between the commander and the ataman takes place on the battlefield in the sixth chapter. In the battle the ataman kills Nikolai and, soon afterwards, he discovers that he killed his own son. The story ends with the suicide of the ataman.

From the above description we notice that Sholokhov does not follow the traditional construction of the story: introduction, climax, and denouement. Chronological and logical sequences are often dispensed with as incidents occur before the conditions governing them. The relations between the characters are told or their behaviour described before they themselves appear on the scene. The air of mystery which surrounds his stories at the beginning is largely a result of these devices; it eventually vanishes and the world of reality appears. At the beginning of the above described story the author introduces us to the main character, then in the following chapter he describes the circumstances in which the hero lives. In a few flashbacks one learns a few facts about Koshevoi's childhood. There is an element of mystery surrounding the ataman and we do not learn that he is Nikolai's father until the very end. In the story "Chervotochina" we learn that friction exists between father and son and the reason for it before we meet them. In the story

"Chuzhaia krov'" we are introduced to the old man who suffers the loss of his son and then the author reconstructs the scene of the son's parting from his parents. In the story "Nakhalenok" one does not learn that Mishka is illegitimate until later in the story, after we have been introduced to the main characters. In the story "Prodcomissar" the reader is introduced to the main character as a mature man, then in the flashback we learn why he has chosen that particular path in life and not another.

Many of Sholokhov's stories contain two climaxes; however, the effect of the story seems to rest on the final climax, in the sudden revelation, at its very conclusion. In the story "Rodinka" the first climax is the death of a son at the hand of his father, the second, the death of a father. The final climax usually coincides in these stories with the denouement. In the story "Chuzhaia krov'" the first climax takes place when the old man Gavrila finds out about the death of his son and the second -- the parting scene between Gavrila and the young man Pet'ka whom the peasant nursed back to life. In the story "Chervotochina" the first climax occurs when the son dies at the hand of his father, the second when the father discovers that he killed his own son for the crime which the son did not commit.

The endings of the stories are less various than the beginnings. Some of them end abruptly with the second climax, while others end on the optimistic note concerning the future of the hero or the triumph of his ideas. For example, in the story "Smertnyi vrag" Efim Ozerov, before his death at the hands of the kulaks, pronounces to himself words that even though he will die he will be replaced by twenty people like himself; in

the story "Pastukh" the main hero dies, but his ideas are carried forward by his sister Dunia; in the story "Aleshkino serdtse" the main hero is mortally wounded, but he gets better after some time and becomes a member of the Komsomol.

In Sholokhov's stories exist unities of purpose and standpoint. All the parts of the story contribute to a unified impression and the picture of heroic life is not blurred or confused by any change of standpoint or by inharmonious elements. His narrative is highly personalized, for he tells the story himself as he sees it and his comments are not confined to the beginning or the end. He is continually entering in his own person to explain and to take sides. He makes liberal use of dialogue as an organic and necessary part of his narrative. The two social groups are well defined and are unified by characteristics which are peculiar to each of them. The action of the stories is simple and easy to grasp.

Although Sholokhov's picture of social reality of his time seems to conform to the reality that is generally recognized and accepted by the Party, he preserved in some of his stories his individuality as an independent artist and was able to express objectively his private thoughts and personal emotions regarding human values unrelated to the political convictions, a characteristic which came fully to the fore in his greatest novel Tikhii Don. In the next chapter I shall attempt to indicate wherein lies the author's objectivity, in other words, what feelings or deeds of Sholokhov's heroes rise above the provincialism of the time and place and represent the profound truth of the humanity as a whole.

CHAPTER III

UNIVERSALITY AND OBJECTIVITY AS REFLECTED IN DONSKIE RASSKAZY

Sholokhov's passionate faith in the Revolution did not cloud his understanding and sensitivity to basic universal human needs and values. However, before I deal with the universal and particular (objective) qualities in Sholokhov's short stories, I shall attempt to develop the idea of what I mean by universal.

The implicit sense of the word universality as related to art consists in the fact that the ambition of any artist is to rise above the historical sense and the national boundaries. Even if the literary creation reflects the particular moment in the history of the author's world, if it is to be considered good literature and not a documentary appraisal of the civilization of the epoch to which the author belongs, he should deal not only with the external environment of the society, but also with the fundamental human emotions and essential relationships: "Of all the qualities which make the universality in literature, the successful portrayal of human character is the most important."[32] The described characters, while representing the epoch and the people by means of the language, the mode of behavior, and the customs of the day, must be simultaneously independent of the time and the place. As a result, the inner life of the described characters of such a creation reflects a common experience of mankind which is significant to other ages. However, such a creation comes as a result of the deep knowledge of the human mind and the supreme creative concentration. Only then the

[32]William Flint Thrall and Addison Hibbard, A Handbook to Literature (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960), p. 500.

history of the peoples becomes the history of the human spirit as well, and the literary work finds its origin in both the universal and the national literatures.

In depicting faithfully the life he knew best, Sholokhov was able to distill from it in some of his stories the essence of the eternal and universal human problems of good and evil, love and hate, pride and jealousy, life and death. Therefore we are able to read some of his stories not only as a "biological" analysis of the time and the people described, as Soviet critics would have it, but as the illustration of some feelings, experiences and deeds which appear constantly and everywhere irrespective of time and place. However, because Sholokhov and his stories are a product of a certain age, we shall treat the stories by the two different criteria: that which is dictated by the perception of the permanent character of human nature and that which is based upon the perception of the social and political changes that were taking place in the Don region. I shall attempt in this chapter first of all to analyze Sholokhov's stories as reflection of the life of the people in the revolutionary era and then proceed to analyze the universal qualities of some of the stories.

The plots and themes of Sholokhov's stories are based upon the events of the revolutionary period. Against the background of the Civil War Sholokhov upholds the picture of the life and work of the cossacks and attempts to construct sharp and difficult situations in which heroes and heroines exhibit their qualities, motivations of their deeds and desires. There is a clear depiction of sharp conflicts, dramatic happenings, bloody scenes, suffering, and little happiness.

> От Донских рассказов буквально пахнет порохом и кровью.[33]

All the short stories are tightly bound together by the singularity of their theme -- the class struggle which penetrated not only among neighbours, but right into the very family life. One of the reasons for such a mortal hatred among the members of the family as well as the community who suddenly found themselves on the opposite sides, was the spontaneous wave of the Revolution when the oppressed were suddenly given a chance to avenge the oppressors. Also, some of the poor peasants undoubtedly wished to demonstrate their solidarity with the newly-formed Bolshevik government which promised them land, bread and peace. Soviet critics insist that Sholokhov was portraying cossack-peasants as Bolsheviks and Communists, peasants with a completely new mentality under the influence of the Revolution. Such arguments do not appear convincing to us. To regard the Don peasants as Communists in the 1920's is simply not plausible. If we are to believe J. Kunitz, the peasant was just beginning to distinguish between the terms Bolshevik and Communist, essentially synonymous terms.

> Bolsheviks to him were those who stood for peace and confiscation of land; Communists those who used new-fangled words, attacked the Orthodox Church, the holy saints, the marriage rights, declared woman the equal of man, hailed the poorest peasant as the salt of the earth.[34]

We should also take into consideration the fact that the cossacks, nurtured in the non-conformity and social superiority, could hardly be

[33] L. Iakimenko, Tvorchestvo M.A. Sholokhova, p. 46.

[34] J. Freeman, J. Kunitz, L. Lozowick, Voices of October (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1930), p. 98.

expected to forsake these deeply-rooted traditions and acquire a new outlook on life in such a relatively short period of time.

In the Don region, as in Russia proper, in 1917 came forth an ageless conflict between the privileged few and the common people, between tyranny and liberty. Sholokhov's short stories deal with human emotions in their primitive states, uncomplicated by intellectual rationalization; therefore, we should look for the causes of the peasants' insurgent mood in their desire for land and for better life.

Having been denied the right to own the land for centuries, during the Revolution peasants were told that they were its rightful inheritors. Stuck in their perpetual inertia and indifference to the government institutions, the Revolution began to influence not only social conditions and their way of life, but also their way of thinking. Resentful of degrading dependence upon the rich and inclined to be hostile towards the existing authorities, many peasants were ready to follow those who promised them land and peace.

Land is more than a means of making a living for the peasant; it is his main reason for existence, his strength and his self-realization, as Sholokhov ably demonstrated. Whether his characters are kulaks or impoverished peasants, they dream about the land, search for it, and sacrifice their lives for it. The land becomes the cause of many deaths, much unhappiness, and family break-ups. Thus, the insurgent mood of the peasants was, to a large extent, due to the want of the land and partly due to the consequences of the changes that were taking place in Russia.

Another by-product of the Revolution was the disintegration of the patriarchal family, which until then was very strong in the cossack families. In this patriarchal society the authority of the father as the

head of the family was unquestionable. He was responsible for making all the important decisions concerning not only the daily business of the household, but also the personal lives of the members of the family. The wife and the children were expected to obey these decisions with absolute submission and humility. As we learn from the stories, farming was the chief occupation of these families and their only source of income. Because everything was concentrated in the hands of the father, he was also responsible for providing material security for his family. Such a family establishment resulted in the complete dependence of the family members upon the father.

This strict behaviour in the family surroundings often created tension between father and son. The son often wanted to free himself from the parental authority and become more independent. In all the stories in which Sholokhov depicts sons rebelling against their fathers, not once does the author show that there ever existed a close, warm relationship between them. In these cases the father was always stern and detached and, as a result, the father and son never experienced a close relationship. Consequently sons showed a strong dislike for the unapproachable fathers and a deep sympathy for all those whom their fathers abused. The best example of such behaviour is found in the story "Prodkomissar".

> Так было: июль знойный, на межах желтопенная ромашка, покос хлебов, Игнашке Бодягину - четырнадцать лет. Косил с отцом и работником. Ударил отец работника за то, что сломал зубец у вил; подошел Игнат к отцу вплотную, сказал, не разжимая зубов:
> - Сволочь ты, батя...
> - Я?!
> - Ты...

> Ударом кулака сшиб с ног Игната, испорол до крови чересседельией. [35]

Often the son's rebellion against a tyrannical father took silent and inner forms as evidenced in the story "Chervotochina".

> - Ты человек? - помолившись, спросил Яков Алексеевич.
> - Тебе лучше знать...
> - Ну, а если человек и садишься с людьми за стол, то крести харю. В этом и разница промеж тобой й быком. Это бык так делает: из яслев жрет, а потом повернулся и туда же надворничает.
> Степка направился было к двери, но одумался, вернулся и на ходу крестясь, скользнул за стол.[36]

However, after the Revolution the situation began to change. The women were given equal rights with the men; the land was being collectivized. Women and grownup children were encouraged to join the collectives and earn their own living. The patriarchal family was disintegrating.

Still another change that was taking place in the lives of the cossacks due to the Revolution was the transition from the near barbaric way of living to the civilized way of living. According to the author the rich peasants took unlimited advantage of and downgraded the poor peasants, treating them rarely as human beings. After the Revolution, however, with the coming of the Bolsheviks into the area, the situation changed. The Bolsheviks hated the kulaks just as much as the local peasants did; they not only helped the poor peasants to destroy the kulaks, but they also, and always, managed to appear as "deus ex machina" to set things on the correct path. The relationship between a Bolshevik

[35] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 34.

[36] Ibid., p. 233.

and a peasant was based on mutual respect and trust, although often the Bolsheviks had to prove that they were worthy of the trust. The Bolsheviks demonstrated unlimited patience towards the peasants in their attempts to change and improve the peasants' backward ways and habits of living.

The author's world is peopled with two classes -- the rich and the poor. In portraying the class struggle between the rich and the poor cossacks, Sholokhov constantly brings forth contrasts between the traditional way of life and -- as he thinks -- the "humane" Soviet way of life. In juxtaposing those two systems, the author emphasizes the results of the transition from the cruel past to the present humane society. On the one hand, we have the cold judicial statement; on the other, a presentation warmed and coloured by emotion.

Some idea of the working of this emotional treatment can be gathered from an examination concerning comparative conditions of life as enjoyed by the upper classes and those endured by the farm labourers. In the story "Aleshkino serdtse" the author contrasts the life of a priest who enjoys the best food while another family, except for one member, dies of starvation. Perhaps the comparison is a just one, but the significant point is that one description is charged with sentimental and humanistic values, whereas the other reflects a stubborn defence of things as they are. The author dwells upon the kulaks' atrocities, vulgarities, and cruelties, whereas he takes pain to emphasize the humanity of the poor peasants. The kulaks' atrocities are regarded as a rule rather than exception. In the story "Prodkomissar" the kulak beats up a hired man for no apparent reason. In the story "Pastukh" a young boy is killed by the kulak for demanding that the fertile land be allotted

on an equal basis to all cossacks. The author does both, prosecution and defence, with effects upon the reader's mind. Here Sholokhov demonstrates his inability or rather his unwillingness to suggest anything beyond the immediately comprehensible facts of existence. His sinners are depicted with much hate and his men and women of virtue are depicted with much love.

Sholokhov rarely takes on a detached stance to see events and people he describes. Generally, one can say that it is the result of his personal involvement in what he depicts and the ideological teaching of the Party regarding the writer's presentation of the material. However, Sholokhov's investigation of the cossack life is not always related to the ideological teaching of the Party; and at times he is also able to divorce his personal feelings from the facts. Sholokhov presents in some of his stories a comprehensive sympathy for human nature. The sympathy and tolerance of all varieties of humans enables him to describe with realistic accuracy the pageant of human life as it passes before his keenly observing eye. Many of his characters embody universal traits, universal in the sense that Sholokhov's portrayal of them is "true" to certain general and basic experiences of humanity. At times the young author, in describing the cruelty of people towards each other, seems to stop to ponder what is really happening. He is not always clear as to who is right and who is guilty. The note of human sympathy seems to indicate that circumstances are at fault rather than human will. In the story "Rodinka" an ataman of the White Army meets his opponent, a commander of the Red Army, on the battlefield. After the courageous battle he kills the young commander and, moments later, discovers he has killed his own son. Overcome with parental grief, the father commits suicide.

Thus, the spirit of an age has not changed the heart of mankind nor deeply affected human relations. Another story in which the author continues the same philosophy is "Zherebenok". During the cross-fire between the Reds and the Whites, a Red cossack swims across the river to save a drowning colt. In respect for the traditional love of animals, the whites stop shooting and resume fire only after the colt has been rescued, and kill the cossack. Although the cossack is killed, the colt will live for all that it symbolizes: it symbolizes family love, harvest, ploughing, peace and stability.

Many people, tired of war, tired of the turmoil of the times, often ceased to care about politics. In fact they would have tolerated any system promising peace. Nikolka Koshevoi, from the story "Rodinka", weary of war and politics, often dreams of peace and becomes conscious of his thirst for knowledge.

> Учиться бы поехать... Военком стыдит: мол, слова правильно не напишешь, а еще эскадронный... Я-то при чем, что не успел приходскую школу окончить? Чудак он... А тут банда... Опять кровь, а я уж уморился так жить... Опостылело все...[37]

As the Civil War progressed, many cossacks, especially the older ones, were becoming skeptical of all authority; however, they were unable to remedy the situation due to the fact that they no longer had trust in any type of institution. A vivid example of this may be found in the story "Semejnyi chelovek", where an old man, taking the narrator of the story across the river by boat, tells his passenger the story of his life.

[37] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 13.

However, before doing so, he, in a matter-of-fact tone, asks his listener (narrator) whether he was honourably discharged or whether he had run away from the army. It was just human curiosity that made him ask the question, for the answer would have had no bearing on the old man's opinion of the stranger. The old man begins his story by saying that his daughter cannot forgive him for killing two of his sons. We learn that the father had nine children, and his wife died five days after giving birth to the last child. Two of the eldest, who were his favorites, joined the Red Army and urged him to do likewise, but he refused since he had to take care of the rest of the children. Soon, however, the Whites compelled him to join their army. In the short while two of his sons were captured by the Whites and the father was then ordered to kill them. The father obeys the orders, justifying his deed by the fact that he did not want to orphan the remaining children, but has not had peace of mind since. The story is the tragedy of a man who was forced by circumstances to choose what seemed to him the lesser of two evils. The father cannot understand why his daughter cannot forgive him of his wrong-doings. In her eyes he lost all human dignity for he cared only about himself. The daughter demands a reasonably convincing explanation why he killed his sons, but the father does not recognize any need to justify his action any further, even though he is aware that in the final analysis his action may have been very selfish. Although he does not openly state it, the father tries to justify his actions by his conviction that we are here on earth not to save ourselves or to save our children, but to save both.

The fact that people are often too self-centered and themselves create obstacles which stand in the way of their own happiness is also

illustrated in the story "Krivaia stezhka". The young man Vas'ka, like the above mentioned father, suffers from an acute consciousness of lost honour. The story is about a young man who falls in love with a girl, Niurka, much wealthier than himself. Needless to say, Niurka's father, wishing her to marry a rich man, forbids them to see each other again. Vas'ka beseeches Niurka to wait for him until he comes back from the army, but she refuses to wait. Having only three days left at his disposal before going into the army, Vas'ka decides to retaliate Niurka's parents and as a result finds himself progressively in more difficult situations, eventually reaching a point of no return. The moment he makes the decision, he takes law into his own hands and consequently is confronted with prejudices from both sides and becomes a victim hunted by two forces. In this story the author shows that from generation to generation the human spirit seeks to free itself from the intolerable bondage of its own civilization. The author ponders over the question as to whether life will permit the man to exercise his own free will. The answer is an emphatic no, for each man belongs to a society and to a great extent is ruled by it. Every time man defies the laws of society he becomes the fugitive of its justice, and is alone and helpless against it. Thus, the rejection of the established rules of society and the desperate futility of the tragic pride causes the young man's death. Although Vas'ka dies, the author indicates that the principles for which he fights are defeated, but do not die with him; the quest is unsuccessful but not abandoned.

Another story in which artistic sincerity prevails over ideological considerations is "Chuzhaia krov'". The story centers around two people -- Gavrila and his wife -- who face spiritual if not actual

physical death from a life of inactivity as a result of their son's death. However, one day the government authorities come to collect the grain and are ambushed near Gavrila's house by the White band. Having discovered that all but one were killed, the old man takes the survivor to his house and cares for him despite the fact that moments earlier he was very angry at the same young man for taking his grain away. Gavrila acts instinctively; he doesn't question whether the young man is worth saving because he is a Communist. In spite of their different political convictions, between the two men develops a feeling of solidarity and a very warm friendship; they respect each other's political views. The old people again experience the sensation of having their own sons; they even call him Petr, a namesake of their dead son. His appearance arouses them from lethargy and enables them to live a productive life. But the summer months are passing and Petr has to make a decision whether to remain with these people or to return to Urals. Gavrila tries to persuade him to stay with them, yet he realizes that he will have to agree with Petr's decision whatever it may be. Petr realizes that these people need him, but decides that his responsibility lies with those who are trying to put the country on its feet again. In this story the author tries to present the problems that people faced as the result of the Civil War. However, when such a conflict appears where a hero has to choose between the universal and historical demands, the author resolves the plot in favour of the historical situation in such a way that there is no doubt which one of the two factors is the decisive one.

Such objectivity in Donskie rasskazy characterizes Sholokhov's ability to portray the character of Grigorii in the novel Tikhii Don in a very realistic and objective manner. During the bitter years of

struggle between the Reds and the Whites, Grigorii, like many other cossacks, drifts from one side to the other and even at the very end of the novel he still remains undecided. If the author had chosen a different path for Grigorii, he would have suppressed Grigorii's personality and repudiated his ideals, for more often than not, cossacks at that time seemed to lack any core of personally realized convictions.

Thus, from the above analyses, despite many simplifications in descriptions of cossacks' lives, we can find seeds of great art that are fully realized in Tikhii Don -- the only work of Sholokhov which brought him recognition and fame.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROLE OF NATURE IN DONSKIE RASSKAZY

Apart from describing man as a social being, Sholokhov also describes him as an indivisible part of nature. Without interference of politics and ideology, the author objectively shows us that nature accompanies the development of human life, human activity, and, that in fact, man's survival, to a large degree, depends upon his adaptation to the forces of nature. Therefore, he regards man as a creature of two worlds -- one natural, the other social. In Sholokhov's eyes, all entities of this world are interwoven. Just as the real contemporary world cannot be shut out of the lives of men and women, neither can the physical world be shut out of their lives.

The theme of man being part of the universe in which he dwells is not new in literature, but rather universal, for, aside from the fact that man, to some degree, is able to command his own life and work, he also has to struggle against the forces of nature for survival. The origin of this outlook can be traced to the Romantic period in literature when the writers showed the intimacy between nature and man as well as the indifference of the former to the latter. Like the Romantic writers, Sholokhov does not analyze the relationship between nature and man from a philosophical prospect, although at times philosophical and moral intonations are clearly detectable. In the stories nature has many functions. Its foremost functions, however, are communication of the aesthetic feeling of an artist-writer and exposition of nature's practical aspects as seen through the eyes of the cossack-peasant.

In Sholokhov's stories there exists, for the most part, a dynamic and harmonious relationship between people and nature. Man is intimately connected with the whole of the physical world. This emphasis upon the physical world carries over into his method of characterization, which focuses mainly upon the human body, its behaviour, and what these reveal about a person's character. As a result, by describing the character's appearance and behaviour in their peasant setting, the author is able to reveal as much about them as he does by what they say. Therefore, due to the fact that Sholokhov assigns with equal emphasis just as much importance to man as a social being as he does to a biological one, it can be safely deduced that in spite of some ambivalence that may arise concerning his view of the fate of a man, in the final analysis he proves himself to be a convinced materialist. Although there is no question as to which philosophy prevails at the end -- we shall discuss this in the following chapter -- in his early stories and, certainly, in his greatest work Tikhii Don Sholokhov demonstrates that man's existence depends upon favorable conditions of, and an interaction with his environment.

In describing the cossack-peasants, Sholokhov shows that most of them are barely distinguishable from the vital landscapes in which they grow crops and lead their daily lives.

> Приподнимая голову, улыбнулся отец, сощурились выцветшие серые глаза, на щеках, залохматевших серой щетиной, вылегли черные гнутые борозды.[38]

Very frequently we find that a peasant's outward appearance or part of

[38] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 16.

his anatomy resembles plants and skies, and that his behaviour is similar to or identified with that of an animal or a bird.

There are a few comparisons between man and plants:

...а кожа-как вишневая кора...[39]

Мишка собой щуплый, волосы у него с весны были как лепестки цветущего подсолнечника,...[40]

...у отца рыжие усы затопорщились над губой, как сибирьки...[41]

Яков Алексеевич - старинной ковки человек: ширококостый, сутуловатый; борода, как новый просяной веник,...[42]

...к полудню лицо его полыхало, как куст боярышника, зажженный морозом...[43]

during a particular season:

Кружится голова у Петьки, тошнотой наливается грудь, а в сердце, как жито майское после дождя, цветет радость.[44]

Была обида горькая, как полынь в цвету.[45]

There are, occasionally, comparisons between people and skies:

...а глаза ясные, светлые, как небушко...[46]

...а образ первого, родного, меркнет, тускнеет,

[39] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 45.

[40] Ibid., p. 125.

[41] Ibid., p. 128.

[42] Ibid., p. 232.

[43] Ibid., p. 323.

[44] Ibid., p. 97.

[45] Ibid., p. 314.

[46] Ibid., p. 255.

как отблеск заходящего солнца на слюдовом оконце хаты.[47]

And there are comparisons between people and animals and insects:

...тыкаясь в стены, как слепые щенки, полезли к выходу.[48]

Ноги в морщеных сапогах, как паучьи лапки, судорожно задвигались...[49]

Утрами, словно выпущенный табун жеребят, взбрыкивая, бежали детишки в школу.[50]

And then, there are comparisons between people and birds:

Прут, будто галь черная.[51]

Эскадрон похож был на ватагу диких гусей, рассыпанную по небу выстрелами охотников:...[52]

To show a complete fusion of man with his surroundings, whether it be plants or animals, the author utilizes the instrumental case:

...ящерицей скользнул...[53]

Лишь у Васьки буйным чертополохом цвела радость...[54]

[47] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 324.

[48] Ibid., p. 97.

[49] Ibid., p. 101.

[50] Ibid., p. 197.

[51] Ibid., p. 103.

[52] Ibid., p. 229.

[53] Ibid., p. 68.

[54] Ibid., p. 184.

В середке змеей жалость греется к нему,...[55]

Парень, гоголем поднимая голову,...[56]

Often times there is a reciprocal relationship. Not only do people resemble nature, but nature resembles people.

Степь, иссохшая, с чахоточным румянцем зорь, в полдень задыхалась от зноя. Лежа на спине, смотрел Григорий на бугор, задернутый тающей просинью, и казалось ему, что степь живая и трудно ей под тяжестью неизмеримой поселков, станиц, городов. Казалось, что в прерывистом дыханье колышется почва, а где-то внизу, под толстыми пластами пород, бьется и течется иная, неведомая жизнь.[57]

Из степи шла ночь, сгущая краски; и едва лишь село солнце, над колодезным журавлем повисла, мигая, звездочка, застенчивая и смущенная, как невеста на первых смотринах.[58]

Nature is always present in the lives of the people. It goes along with them, sharing their excitement and depressions, it sympathizes with them, supports and caresses them in their time of trouble and happiness. In the story "Rodinka" the main character Nikolai Koshevoi goes into the garden in a very depressed state of mind:

Спустился в вишневый садик и лег на траву, заплаканную, седую от росы.[59]

[55] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 199.

[56] Ibid., p. 270.

[57] Ibid., p. 24.

[58] Ibid., p. 206.

[59] Ibid., p. 13.

After the suicide of the ataman in the same story:

> ...с лохматой головы атамана нехотя сорвался коршун-стервятник. Сорвался и растаял в в сереньком, по-осеннему бесцветном небе.[60]

After the death of her brother in the story "Pastukh", Duniashka goes to the unknown city alone while

> Степь кругом залегла неприветная, сумрачная.[61]

In the story "Dvukhmuzhniaia", the relationship between Anna and Arsenii is associated with sensuous beauty of the surroundings, with blossoms, and the intoxicating air. During their rendezvous

> Сады обневестились, зацвели цветом молочно-розовым, пьяным. В пруду качаловском, в куге прошлогодней, возле коряг, ржавых и скользких, ночами хмельными -- лягушачьи хороводы, гусиный шепот любовный, туман от воды...[62]

However, her relationship with her husband Aleksandr is associated with autumn and its bare trees. At the time of their meeting

> Оголился сад, под макушками тополей мечется ветер, скупо стелет под ноги кумачовые листья.[63]

In the same story the fields of rye are being scorched by the rays of the sun, and at the same time Anna leaves Arsenii to return to her first

[60] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 20.

[61] Ibid., p. 32.

[62] Ibid., p. 193.

[63] Ibid., p. 198.

husband. The suffering and loneliness of Arsenii can be compared to the suffering of the ear of rye under the oppressive heat:

> У качаловцев хлебец начисто погорел, по полю, коричневому от загара, колос от колоса -- не слыхать девичьего голоса, да и то не колос, а так сухобыл один, коренастый и порожний, пустотой звенит под ветром.[64]

The elements of nature seem to be capable of all things, and are as ready for the surprising metamorphosis as the people are. In the story "Pastukh" the rain acts as an accomplice by helping the murderers erase their footsteps.

> Широка степь и никем не измерена. Много по ней дорог и проследков. Темней темного ночь осенняя, а дождь следы лошадиных копыт начисто смоет...[65]

Nature, at times, is depicted as indifferent, if not actively hostile to the human community. In the story "Bakhchevnik"

> Солнце, как нарочно, замедляет шаг и ползет над станицей, равнодушное к Митькиному нетерпению и невозмутимое.[66]

In the story "Chuzhaia krov" the moon appears to enjoy the mother's grieving for her dead son.

> В оконце, месяц нагло засматривал, на чужое горе, на материнскую тоску любуясь.[67]

[64] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 195.

[65] Ibid., p. 31.

[66] Ibid., p. 68.

[67] Ibid., p. 315.

Very often nature and the forces of nature act as prognosticating agents -- they prompt a misfortune or a happy occasion for the people. On the eve when the two kulaks are planning to kill a poor peasant in the story "Smertnyi vrag" there is a big storm in the village. The violent and restless wind can be compared with the violence and restlessness of the kulaks. But the coming alive of the wind can also be interpreted as nature's way of awakening and warning the potential victim who has become indifferent to the threats made upon his life by his enemies. Sholokhov's sense of a living power animating nature is so keen that he personifies it at the same time.

> Ветер с разбойничьим посвистом мчался по улицам, турсучил скованные морозом голые деревья, нахально засматривал под застрехи построек, ерошил перья у нахохленных спящих воробьев...[68]

In the story "Krivaia stezhka", after Niurka's father refuses to let her marry the man she loves, the weather becomes exceptionally bad, and even

> Дикие гуси почему-то летели с востока на запад,...[69]

One can interpret the flight of the wild geese in the opposite direction as a prediction that Vas'ka will take a course of action which is contrary to his nature as a result of the girl's father's decision.

In the story "Nakhalenok", immediately before the massacre of the Red partisans by the Whites, in the skies whirled clouds which have a bloody appearance.

[68] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 211.

[69] Ibid., p. 183.

> ...в оконце видно, как за прудом нежно бледнеет небо и розовой кровянистой пеной клубятся плывущие с востока облака.[70]

The sun, a source of life, always prognosticates death when it becomes covered by a cloud. Shortly before the death of Nikolai Koshevoi in the story "Rodinka"

> Солнце закрылось тучей, и на степь, на шлях, на лес, ветрами и осенью отерханный, упали плывущие тени.[71]

In the story "Krivaia stezhka", the sun, partly covered by clouds, symbolizes the young man's loneliness and his alienation from the people and life.

> Солнце, конфузливо мелькавшее за тучами, казалось жалким и беспомощным.[72]

Just as the forces of nature speak a language of their own and forecast different occurrences, the plants play a similar role in the lives of the people. In the story "Krivaia stezhka" Vas'ka indicates that he would like to marry Niurka, and Niurka asks him to send the matchmakers. However, after they part, he begins to doubt her sincerity and crushes the leaf of a plant in the palm of his hand.

> Васька долго сидел под копною, растирал промеж ладоней приторную листву любистика,...[73]

[70] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 134.

[71] Ibid., p. 19.

[72] Ibid., p. 183.

[73] Ibid., p. 181.

This gesture foretells and symbolizes the break-up of their relationship. Just before he sends the matchmakers to her, the sky acquires a thorny appearance; the thorny rose (Russ. - shipovnik) becomes a symbol of death for the young people.

> За тремя тополями, куда зашло на ночь солнце, небо цвело шиповником, и крутые вздыбленные облака казались увядшими лепестками.[74]

When Niurka tells Vas'ka that she will not wait for him until he comes from the army

> Нюрка с хрустом ломала в руках сухую ветку...[75]

In the story "Pastukh", before Grigorii was murdered

> Григорий, накинув зипун, ходил за ними следом, головку поблеклую придорожного татарника мял в ладонях задумчиво.[76]

We shall now discuss the motif of the mode of life and death in both the worlds -- that of nature and that of human beings. In the stories we find that Sholokhov juxtaposes the two ideas concerning life and death of the human and non-human worlds. On the one hand, he shows that there is a continuous flux between them; on the other hand, he shows that a non-human world leads a life of its own, completely independent of the human one. The motif of life and death in nature is contrasted with that found in the human community, and it is through nature, rather

[74] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 182.

[75] Ibid., p. 185.

[76] Ibid., p. 30.

than people, that the author underlines the perpetual continuation of life. The first instance of this is the dramatic contrast in the first story of the collection "Rodinka". Against a background of a beautiful summer we see the cruel destruction of man by his fellow being. Let us compare the mode of living of the man in that story to the life of nature.

> ...мимо столбов шляхом глянцевитым ведет атаман банду -- полсотни казаков донских и кубанских, властью советской недовольных. Трое суток, как набедившийся волк от овечьей отары, уходят дорогами и целиною бездорожно, а за ним вназирку -- отряд Николки Кошевого.
>
>
>
> Так и уходят по-волчьи, а за ними эскадрон Николки Кошевого следы топчет.
>
> Днями летними, погожими в степях донских, под небом густым и прозрачным звоном серебряным вызванивает и колышется хлебный колос. Это перед покосом, когда у ядреной пшеницы гарновки ус чернеет на колосе, будто у семнадцатилетнего парня, а жито дует вверх и норовит человека перерасти.[77]

In the story "Chervotochina", because of the differences in their ideological outlook, the father makes his son's life very difficult and eventually kills him. In this story Sholokhov contrasts the struggle of the people to annihilate each other with the struggle of plants for life in the early spring. Throughout his stories Sholokhov emphasizes the fact that the basic world of plants, earth and animals is free of malignant hostility and revenge. As a result, in his cruelty, man surpasses nature. In the story "Kolovert", while Mikhail kills his own father and his brother, the she-wolf is giving birth to a cub.

[77] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 14.

> На бугре -- за буйными всходами пшеницы, в яру, промытом вешней водой, в буреломе, в запахе пьяном листьев лежалых -- ночью щенилась волчица: стонала, как женщина в родах, грызла под собой песок, кровью пропитанный, и, облизывая первого мокрого шершавого волчонка, услышала неподалеку -- из лощины, из зарослей хвороста -- два сиповатых винтовочных выстрела и человеческий крик.
>
> Прислушалась настороженно и в ответ короткому стонущему крику завыла волчица хрипло и надрывно.[78]

Another instance where Sholokhov contrasts the behaviour of man and animal is in the story "Rodinka". A wolf comes out of its den, hears the sound of a machine gun and then goes off indifferently into the valley. The machine gun in this story symbolizes the ill-will of man and his arrogance, the emphasis on the wolf's indifference serving as a sarcastic affirmation of human augustness in nature. In comparing man's behaviour with that of animals, the animals are described more favourably and put on the higher level.

Very often man's behaviour resembles that of an animal, particularly when the author underlines the self-destroying activity of man.

> В лесу, в буреломе, затравленный, как волк на облаве, как бешеная собака, умрет от пули своего же станичника он Васька,...[79]
>
> ...завыл долгим и тягучим волчьим воем.[80]
>
> Лисьи глазки Игната таинственно улыбались, глядя на Ефима.[81]

[78] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 165.

[79] Ibid., p. 187.

[80] Ibid., p. 190.

[81] Ibid., p. 218.

...хищно поблескивая зубами, щерился Максим.[82]

Степка, глядя в холодные отцовы глаза, на жесткие по-звериному изломы губ,...[83]

...по-собачьему жадными глазами хозяев,...[84]

В глазах потемнело, зверем кинулся к ней,...[85]

However, despite the fact that nature seems to mock human endeavours, Sholokhov refuses to belittle the human community, for in his eyes people are not utterly irrational, destructive heroes. While man seeks to give his life structure, nature is static -- it follows its cycles. The plants, the wind and the rain continue along their own courses in an endless, repetitive pattern, while man, to a large degree, is able to command his own life and work. Man possesses the imaginative faculty and dignity which elevate him beyond the world of nature, expressed through their action and animation rather than spineless submission to fate. Although his means of changing his destiny is limited to the use of only violence, he nevertheless is still intended to serve as a heroic exemplar. In spite of the above differences of these two worlds, there exists a gregarious intimacy between them, for together they create a complementary whole. In the eyes of Sholokhov, as well as in those of his heroes, life, in spite of its difficulties, is full of magic and enchantment.

[82] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 234.

[83] Ibid., p. 238.

[84] Ibid., p. 277.

[85] Ibid., p. 315.

По ночам в бурю волны стучатся под яром, ставни тоскуют, захлебываясь, и чудится Николке, что вода вкрадчиво ползет в щели пола и, прибывая, трясет хату.[86]

We have tried to point out many functions of nature in the stories, which make nature, as a result, an indivisible part of the human context. Whether the author wants to show the inner emotional condition of man, his outward appearance or the irreconcilability of the two camps, he invariably makes use of the comparison between man and nature and, seldom, he draws comparison between men. Of all the figures of speech, metaphor and simile are used most frequently as expression of the unity or the disharmony between man and nature and among men. The artistic function of nature serves to unfold man's inner world and his behaviour. The author also connects it with the context for nature is the field of man's work and his livelihood. However, sometimes in the stories nature passes before our eyes without any relationship to people. People are unhappy or joyful independent of nature. Even in these instances, though, where nature does not seem to be fulfilling any function, but is just an independent parallel, its context in this connection reflects man and often parallelism changes into contrast. The author refrains from passing moral judgement on man in those places where, for example, he contrasts the good of nature with the evil doings of man. He simply points to the immortality of nature, its triumph over people. But at the same time the moral tone is present, for the tranquility of nature brings forth and makes obvious that tragedy. Neither does the author draw any philosophical conclusions when he makes a parallel between the two

[86]M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, I, p. 12.

worlds, but the philosophical intonation is present when the final pronouncement is to the advantage of man. While man is similar to nature, according to Sholokhov, he at the same time is higher than nature, while nature, in its turn, is similar to man, is also inferior to him. But for the most part, however, the two worlds are closely interwoven.

CHAPTER V

EVOLUTION OF SHOLOKHOV AS A WRITER AND A CRITIC

Sholokhov's Early Stories Versus His Statements Regarding Soviet Literature

Until now we discussed some aspects of Sholokhov as a short story writer. It seems that we have touched upon the main points of his craftsmanship and ideological aspects of the first period of his writing and shall now conclude the thesis by juxtaposing his critical statements pertaining to literature with the literary practice of the earlier period. In studying the author's comments concerning literature, which he reiterated frequently, beginning in 1934, one finds the they are in harmony with most of the stories of Donskie rasskazy. Sholokhov made his first public statement to the workers of Rostov-na-Donu in 1934 concerning the task of literature entitled "Literatura - chast' obshcheproletarskogo dela".

> Надо каждому из нас, пишущему ещё раз и крепче подумать как мы будем работать на пользу рабочего класса и нашей партии, какими средствами будем отображать величайшую эпоху, какими средствами сможем полнее насытить наши произведения, чтобы они звучали дополненным набатом не только внутри страны, но и за рубежами её, чтобы книги наши заряжали нашего советского читателя на дальнейшую работу... [87]

[87] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie sochinenii v vos'mi tomakh (Moskva: Izd-vo Pravda, 1968), t. 8, p. 268.

As in the above statement, in these stories too, he sustained the principles of purpose and faith in the Soviet system and often submerged the individual into the ideological cause of the state. At the same time, however, his belief in the Soviet system did not prevent him from describing the diversity and richness of the human character independently of the state and its current politics. In these stories Sholokhov often concerned himself with the faithful depiction of reality which he continued to emphasize in the critical statements pertaining to literature. But already in this transitory period between the earlier stories and his later literary output he did not evoke the independent role of the writer in depicting that reality. He insisted now that it was the reader's duty to keep a close watch over the writer, and that it was the writer's duty to justify the expectations of the reader and those of the Party. Thus, whereas in the earlier period Sholokhov displayed a certain undogmatic flexibility, he upheld a rigid ideological position in his later writings, with the exception of Tikhii Don, and as a result, their themes appear to reflect the core of his dogmatic comments concerning literature.

Sholokhov wants to see literature as a single unified stream of development. The primary justification for a literary product, he insists, is the perpetuation of the ideological and moral teaching of the Communist Party. We find that one uniform theme flows throughout his statements, namely, that literature must serve the needs of the people and the Party.

In the article "Sozdavat' proizvedenia, dostoinye nashego velikogo vremeni" in September, 1948, he writes:

> Мы же, советские писатели, уверенные в победе коммунизма, должны создавать произведения, достойные нашего великого времени.
>
> Я всю свою жизнь служу советскому народу и буду всегда служить ему, отдавая ему все свои силы.[88]

In his speech on the radio in 1952 he expressed a firm belief

> ...что советские писатели упорно идут к одной цели: к беззаветному служению интересам нашего великого народа, нашей великой партии.[89]

The author's self-commitment to the Soviet people and his desire to accommodate his writings to the demands of the Party is expressed in the statement concerning the purpose of literature:

> ...сделать нашу литературу еще более могучей помощницей партии в деле коммунистического воспитания масс, еще более достойной нашего великого народа...[90]

His irreconcilable dogmatism and his condemnation of the writers who deviated from the Party precepts was expressed during the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party in 1956. He stated that the Soviet literature had produced a number of invaluable books and as a result became the leading literature in the world. He accredited such achievements with their propagation of the all-convincing idea of Communism. However, if any of the contemporary Soviet writers, Sholokhov stated, dared to write from the anticommunist point of view his work would not only be not read, but such a writer would suffer a contemptuous oblivion.

[88] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, VIII, p. 361.

[89] Ibid., p. 404.

[90] Ibid., p. 445.

> Так что, как видите, и лавры принадлежат не столько тем, кто писал, сколько той, которая вдохновляла на создание больших произведений, -- нашей родной Коммунистической партии.[91]

The above statements are a testimony as to the depth of Sholokhov's inner convictions, as well as to his rigidity. One may ask a pertinent question: why did Sholokhov change from a rather tolerant position to an intransigent one? It is indeed very difficult to justify Sholokhov's stand, since we know so little about his personal convictions at that time. However, in view of the facts, we would like to venture an explanation as to why the author demands of the writers absolute obedience to the ideology of the Party and later enforces them himself, and why he keeps insisting that the usefulness of literature is limited only to the extent to which the Party sees fit. D.H. Stewart, in his book Mikhail Sholokhov. A Critical Introduction, states that Sholokhov's sudden shift of values came to the fore only in his statements, but in reality he stopped writing literary works and instead he revised his previous works and

> . . . entertained guests beyond numbering, often simple citizens, who visited his house overlooking the Don as they might visit some shrine. In exchange for their advice on how The Quiet Don should end, he conducted them to see the local showpiece, a huge 350-year-old tree, and he fed them the traditional strawberry jam.[92]

Stewart absolves Sholokhov from "selling out" also on the basis that the writer did not comply with Stalin's wishes to make Grigorii

[91] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, VIII, p. 459.

[92] D.H. Stewart, Mikhail Sholokhov. A Critical Introduction, p. 180.

Melekhov a Communist and makes a martyr out of the writer on the grounds that he was instrumental in reinstating several members of the Communist Party to their former positions, members who were unjustly punished in the latter half of the 1930's. We could attribute some credibility to Stewart's claims if Sholokhov's literary career were limited to his statements concerning literature. However, he resumed his literary career roughly after one decade and his guiding principles which he voiced in 1934 remained unshaken. It appears that his change of attitude was due to the difficulties of the publication of the novel Tikhii Don.

Sholokhov could not hope for any leniency from Stalin in publishing his novel Tikhii Don, since the situation in the literary field under his rule was progressing from bad to worse. However, there was one way left open to him to save the publication of the novel in a form as close to the original as possible, and that was to convince Stalin that he was a loyal subject and a writer interested only in the objective and realistic depiction of the transitional period of the Don cossacks. In 1929 Sholokhov announced his intention of becoming a member of the Communist Party, and the following year he became a full-fledged member. It was also obvious to him at that time that in order to be permitted to continue his literary career, the writer had no choice, but to comply with the official cannons of writing. Thus, if we are to consider Sholokhov a martyr, it is not because he fought for the reinstatement of the unjustly punished Communists, but because he desperately attempted to save the book in which he depicted the history of the four generations of the Don cossacks, the only work of this kind. However, becoming a member of the Party was not enough; further commitments were necessary. At first came the statements concerning literature, then came the chance

to put these statements into practice, and in the not so distant past he launched his vicious attacks upon the young generations of writers who deviated from the official norms of writing. Sholokhov's attacks on such writers as Daniel and Syniavskii were not surprising. If dedicated Communists were punished despite the fact that they were not guilty of betraying the Party and the state in the eyes of Sholokhov, who indeed proved himself a stern and dedicated Communist, then people like Daniel and Syniavsky, who openly stated their dissatisfaction with the state, should indeed be punished according to him. Although we realize the simplicity of this explanation, it appears to be a valid one.

Sud'ba cheloveka -- A Logical Conclusion to "Put'-dorozhen'ka"

Now we shall attempt to analyze one of his stories of the later period, Sud'ba cheloveka, which is considered by the Soviet critics to be Sholokhov's masterpiece and attempt to determine to what degree the author's statements fulfill his literary practice and correspond to his early stories.

The story Sud'ba cheloveka was published in 1956. It has a deeper dimension about it and develops the author's philosophy on the fate of a man who wants to live in society in accordance with his aspirations. Sholokhov attempted to deal with the abovementioned theme for the first time in the story "Put'-dorozhen'ka" of the collection Donskie rasskazy in the character of Pet'ka Kremnev. In both the stories, Sud'ba cheloveka and "Put'-dorozhen'ka", the main characters and their actions are presented in such a way as to illuminate attitudes and modes of living associated with the concerned people and with a given time. The

character of Pet'ka Kremnev is an historical symbol embodying the struggle of the poor cossacks in the Don region, and the character of Andrei Sokolov is a historical symbol embodying the struggle of the Russian people with the Germans during World War II. Both the characters illuminate an aspect of man's fate, and the only difference between them is that in the story "Put'-dorozhen'ka", Pet'ka Kremnev and people like him rebel and fight due to their own desires to change the centuries-old way of life and attempt to build a new and better society, and the story, therefore, gives a sense of local destiny, while Sud'ba cheloveka gives a sense of general destiny, a sense of the human fate bound up with the fate of the particular incident, namely the Second World War. But we would like to stress once more that both the stories symbolize a certain "fate" -- the fate of the new man which Sholokhov has emphasized in the first story by using for the title the expression from the folklore put'-dorozhen'ka. In this stylistic figure called repetition, its diminutive part dorozhen'ka has an ironical connotation, and, at the same time, it expresses some bitterness. As a whole, however, put'-dorozhen'ka is the synonym for "fate of man".

In spite of the outer differences of their lives, there are many inner similarities between the two people. Both deal with the role and the place of man in conflict. During every moment of the stories, the author makes us conscious that we are dealing at that particular moment, not with the two separate incidents in the history of the nation, that of the Civil War and World War II, nor that we are dealing with the two separate main personages of the stories, but rather with the whole of man's life and that of a nation. Therefore, on this basis, one can say that the character of Andrei Sokolov is the further development of Pet'ka

Kremnev and his fate is a further extension into the new historical circumstances.

An inseparable link which connects the two people is a strong awareness of every man's moral responsibility for the way things are run in this world. As a result, both of them decide that the involvement and the struggle with the occurring events are the only way to give significance to a man's life. They also come to the realization that if one does dare to fight the opposing forces, he must first of all have an unquestionable devotion to his cause and he must also be prepared to suffer as well as to face tragedy. And it is through suffering, they conclude, that people are brought to victory of their ideals.

Sokolov is prepared well for the role he is to play. From early childhood he has been acquainted with the common people's suffering and later he experiences much of it himself. From his youth he is convinced that the suffering is the fate of the poor, the orphaned, and, still later, continues to regard suffering as the outstanding means whereby the humanism of the new socialist age can be given an authentic sense of the meaning of life, of noble ideas and hope. Suffering becomes a prelude to ultimate reward. The main aim of Sokolov has greater aspirations than fighting poverty and doing away with the class society during the Civil War or fighting invaders during the Second World War. During both historical moments, he is aware that he and people like him are faced with a much stronger enemy, but he is also aware that the ultimate victory will be given to the faithful, not the powerful. And that is why the faith and the suffering of Andrei Sokolov acquires a spiritual, religious meaning, for he and the Russian people ultimately become the chosen people to destroy the evil of the times and to bring righteousness to the

world. We cannot help but draw a parallel between the early Christians and the Russian people concerning their struggles with the infidels. Like the early Christians, the Russian people must suffer because they are righteous, and suffering is an essential part of those people's lives. However, whereas for the Christians the source of security and strength was God, the source and security for the Russian people is the Communist Party. In both cases the leaders, that is, the fathers of the Church and leaders of the Party were able to give meaning and purpose to the suffering of their people. While Christians fought under the banner of Christ, the Russian people fought under the banner of Communism. The weapons of the enemies were persecution, hatred and violence, and the weapons of the oppressed were those of faith, love and often cunning. Thus, suffering became a positive chosen instrument of salvation without which the concerned peoples could not have achieved their purpose. No matter from what direction the assaults came, the Russians saw the attacks directed not only against their nation, but also against Communism. After the German invasion, Andrei Sokolov and his people once again expect suffering, in fact by then they accept their fate quite naturally, for they believe that the invasion is the result of their being Communists. It is this conviction which is the driving force behind the struggle and suffering. Andrei Sokolov could face with unquenchable courage the most terrible threats and tortures because he knows that the victory of Communism will be ultimate. As a result, Andrei Sokolov is no longer himself, he belongs to the Party, which becomes his guiding beacon in all his moral and social endeavours.

Andrei Sokolov is portrayed as a good, humane, and saintly man. He is dedicated to the idea of working for the good of humanity without

any thought of personal reward. From the early youth, Andrei helps to fight the enemy of the people and only after the Civil War is he able to give some thought to his personal life. He marries, raises a family and becomes a model husband and father. A new society brings him complete freedom and happiness, releases him from the suffering of the bonds of a class society. Thus, the struggles and sacrifices do not go in vain. But the high price for those ideals has to be paid again. Germany attacks Russia and Sokolov's peaceful life is interrupted by his sense of obligation to defend his country. Henceforth, the story is used as a medium not only for social and moral reform, but political reform as well. Whereas, until now, in the story the emphasis is more on the victory for freedom and humanity, political values bound with morality become more and more an integral part of it. For Sokolov now represents a society in abstraction and, as a result, his behaviour does not reflect the behaviour of an individual, but that of society in the abstract whose supreme standard of value is Communism. We are denied the opportunity to see Sokolov and judge him precisely for what he is due to his actions, since they are predetermined by the moral and political code of the adopted doctrine. Once again Sokolov fills the models of a "typical" infallible Soviet citizen regarding his moral and political views and actions in any situation that presents itself.

The author exploits many incidents in the story to proclaim his philosophy of life and the moral behaviour of a Communist. One of those incidents is Sokolov's captivity, in which he demonstrates the difficulties that a Russian prisoner of war has to encounter solely on the basis of being a citizen of the Soviet Union. His captivity also illustrates that the fraternal dedication and the ability to sympathize is

regarded as one of the chief traits of the complete Communist. Sokolov without hesitation kills one of his fellow-prisoners, who threatens to expose to the enemy the commander and the members of the Communist Party.

Although other people suffer as well during the war, the author insists that the nature of the suffering of the Russian people of that period is completely different. However, an examination of the facts of history clearly shows that there is scarcely any aspect of suffering endured by the Russians which cannot be paralleled by the experience of other people during the war. Like other people, they were compelled to work hard in the concentration camps, exposed to starvation, beating and so the list could continue to show that whatever other claims the Russians might have to a position of special significance, it could not claim a unique experience in suffering. The only unique experience that we can encounter in the story is Sokolov's deep personal animosity towards the Germans. It is due to the fact that during the war in Russia, national feelings were extolled as the highest expression of dedication to the people and its rulers. The ideology of the time raised moral convictions and stimulated fanatical ones, and extreme hatred for the invaders. This opinion can be supported by Sholokhov's speech which he made pending the Second All Union Congress of Soviet Writers.

> Тогда слово художника было на вооружении армии и народа... Была у них одна задача: лишь бы слово их разило врага, лишь бы оно держало под локоть нашего бойца, зажигало и не давало угаснуть в сердцах советских людей жгучей ненависти к врагам и любви к родине.[93]

[93] M. Sholokhov, Sobranie, VIII, pp. 437-438.

The whole concept of the philosophy that through suffering man will eventually obtain his right to live in the society of his own making is not very convincing in this instance, because people like Andrei Sokolov are fighting for the idea as indoctrinated people and this diminishes their universality as human beings. The story is too weak to be an adequate interpretation of the universal aspects of such a philosophy; it needs to illustrate a fuller and larger view of life divorced from the official ideology and, for this, more distinct standards of value are necessary.

Thus, if we juxtapose Sholokhov's literary statements with the stories "Put'-dorozhen'ka" and Sud'ba cheloveka, it becomes evident that there is a gradual, but precise development of the author's convictions. In "Put'-dorozhen'ka", written in 1925, he already attempted to channel the reader's thoughts toward the "proper" ideological path and, in the literary statements beginning in the 1930's, he crystallized his allegiance and committed himself completely to the official cannons of the Soviet regime concerning literature. In his later works, of which Sud'ba cheloveka is a suitable example, Sholokhov adheres to the main principle he advocated, namely, that the written word should edify the reader according to the teaching of the Party.

CONCLUSION

The early stories of Sholokhov from the point of view of his development as a writer are very important since they indicated the problems which will be of predominant concern in his later works. Describing the time of transition and of the most dramatic changes which took place in Russia after the Revolution and during the Civil War, the most outstanding feature of the stories is the author's emphasis upon the sharp class conflicts which erupted in cossack villages and how these conflicts affected the fates and the characters of the concerned people. The social and political differences between those who attempt to preserve the former way of living and those who attempt to change it are sharp and irreconcilable, and the emphasis with which the author presents the brutal behaviour of the people towards each other only demonstrates Sholokhov's preoccupation with passion and violence which were typical features of the time.

In this attempt to depict true to life situations and happenings, Sholokhov also tried to answer the call of the Party to depict the living man in contemporary situations, as well as the positive new forms of the social life which pledged the most optimistic guidance concerning the destiny of the Soviet man and the Soviet system. Thus, to a large extent, there is a noticeable romanticization of the heroes -- the builders of a Soviet way of life, who are always attributed with the best qualities possible, while those opposing the regime are endowed with selfishness, hatred, and an insatiable desire for private property.

Sholokhov, in describing the social and political conflicts

between the cossack-peasants from the author's point of view, nevertheless, demonstrates, to a large degree, the spontaneous approach to the time and the people. That is, while there is no doubt to which side Sholokhov belongs, many of his literary images are not put through the rigid ideological Party indoctrination. Such characters as Gavrila, ataman Koshevoi, and others, are attributed with positive human qualities, even though they may be considered enemies of the State. These stories belong to the more objective group of the collection, and in them Sholokhov devoted more time to the study of the human character, displayed more independence as a writer and the characters, as a result, became more profound and their behaviour more meaningful. This independence, which was still at the experimental stage in the stories, was developed and exercised to the full for the last time in the novel Tikhii Don.

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Works by M.A. Sholokhov Discussed in This Thesis

Sholokhov, M.A. Sobranie sochinenii. Rasskazy, t. 1. Moskva: Goslitizdat, 1956.

_____. Sobranie sochinenii v vos'mi tomakh, t. 8. Moskva: Izd-vo Pravda, 1968.

Section A. Works about Literary Organization from 1917 to 1932

Borland, Harriet. Soviet Literary Theory and Practice During the First Five-Year Plan 1928-32. New York: Greenwood Press, 1969.

Ermolaev, Herman. Soviet Literary Theories 1917-1934. The Genesis of Socialist Realism. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963.

Farber, Leonid. Sovetskaia literatura pervykh let revolutsii 1917-1920 gg. Moskva: Vysshaia shkola, 1966.

Freeman, J., Kunitz, J., Lozowick, L. Voices of October. New York: The Vanguard Press, 1930.

Hayward, Max and Labedz, Leopold. Literature and Revolution in Soviet Russia 1917-1962. London: Oxford University Press, 1963.

Ivanov, Vasilii. Formirovanie ideinogo edinstva sovetskoi literatury 1917-1932. Moskva: Gos. izd-vo khudozh lit-ry, 1960.

Maguire, Robert. Red Virgin Soil. Soviet Literature in the 1920's. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.

Section B. Books about Sholokhov

Abramov, F.A. M.A. Sholokhov. Seminarii. Leningrad: Gos. uchebno-pedagog. izd-vo, 1958.

Bearne, C.G. Sholokhov. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1969.

Britikov, A.F. Masterstvo Mikhaila Sholokhova. Moskva: Nauka, 1964.

Iakimenko, L.G. Tvorchestvo M.A. Sholokhova. Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1964.

Leningrad. Universitet. Mikhail Sholokhov. Sbornik statei. Leningrad: Izd-vo universiteta, 1956.

Lezhnev, Isaak G. Put' Sholokhova. Tvorcheskais biographiia. Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1958.

Lukin, Iu. Mikhail Sholokhov. Kritiko-biographicheskii ocherk. Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1962.

Maslin, N.N. Roman Sholokhova. Moskva: Izd-vo Akad. Nauk SSSR, 1963.

Pavlovskii, P.I., ed. Tvorchestvo M.A. Sholokhova. Sbornik statei. Moskva: Prosveshchenie, 1964.

Petelin, V.V. Gumanizm Sholokhova. Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1965.

Simmons, E.J. Russian Fiction and Soviet Ideology. Introduction to Fedin, Leonov, and Sholokhov. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958.

Soifer, M.I. Masterstvo Sholokhova. Tashkent: Gos. izd-vo lit-ry UzSSR, 1961.

Stewart, H. Mikhail Sholokhov. A Critical Introduction. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967.

Section C. General Background Works

Akademiia Nauk SSSR. Problema kharactera v sovremennoi sovetskoi literature. Moskva: Izd-vo ANSSSR.

_____. Vremia, pafos, stil': khudozhestvennye techeniia v sovremennoi sovetskoi literature. Pod red. V.V. Buznik i V.A. Kovaleva. Moskva: Nauka, 1965.

Gasiorowska, Xenia. Women in Soviet Fiction 1917-1964. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968.

Gei, Nikolai. Esteticheskii ideal sovetskoi literatury. Moskva: Izd-vo ANSSSR, 1962.

Struve, Gleb. Soviet Russian Literature 1917-1950. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951.

Thrall, William Flint and Hibbard, Addison. A Handbook to Literature. New York: Odyssey Press, 1960.

Timofeev, L. Sovetskaia literatura: metod, stil', poetika. Moskva: Sovetskii pisatel', 1964.

B30001